



Echo of Medjugorje

July 1994 - Month of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus. Orig. Ital. edit: Eco di Medj., C.P.149, I-46100 Mantova, Italy. Yr.9#5. All mail to: Echo of Medj., Casella Postale 27, I-31030 Bessica (TV), Italy

113

13th Anniversary Message:

On the 25th June 1994, Our Lady said: **Dear children, Today my heart rejoices at the sight of all of you here. I bless you and I invite you all to make the decision to live the messages that I give you here.**

My dear little children, my desire is to lead you all to Jesus, for He is our salvation. So, my children, the more you pray the more you will belong to me and to my Son Jesus. I bless you all with my motherly blessing and I thank you for having responded to my call.

Decide to pray you will manifest my face and act like Jesus

After 13 years of remaining with us Our Lady is still the Mother. Despite the tragedies and the upheavals in the world, She rejoices and thanks Her children for all that they offer Her while gently reminding them to decide to begin work.

Also in this message Our Lady tells us the reason for Her presence: **to lead the world to Jesus so it may be saved.** In this moment, while Our Lady invites us to decide for Her messages, I hear three words inside of me: **pray, manifest and act.**

1. Prayer is the activity that permits us to move. It is the art that teaches us how to advance in spiritual life, how to meet God, be united to Him and consequently live His life of eternity and fulfilment, and transmit it to others. Prayer is the most efficacious way of purifying the earth, because in prayer we invite God to act on our behalf. He does it with unforeseeable results. Prayer is a work that needs to be continually taken care of.

So there is nothing odd in Our Lady repeating this request to pray. When the Saints lived on this earth their desire to pray was very strong and after prayer they were filled with divine energy. *You also must decide to consecrate a part of your day to encounter God in silence (25.7.89). You will not understand the value of prayer until you tell yourselves: now is time for prayer, now no one and nothing is important except God (2.10.86).*

2. Manifest the face of Our Lady and the Church. This is Our Lady's great desire. At the beginning of the apparitions She asked the parishioners of Medjugorje *to manifest Her face (not that of Satan) to others and to the Church.* This is the only true way we can transmit Our Lady's messages. Then the Church would recognize the authenticity of the apparitions because the Church searches for Her face, which is her own ideal face.

Our Lady particularly wants to transmit to us Her love for the Church, which was born from Her womb through the action of the Holy Spirit, just as Her Son Jesus was born. The faithful, who incarnate this great love of Our Lady for the Church, discover



Our Lady of the Most Precious Blood

You redeemed us Lord with your Blood! "This is the language of truth: hell shakes before the word *Divine Blood!* It has been written: *They defeated the dragon with the Blood of the Lamb.*" (St Gaspard del Bufalo)

The Precious Blood of Jesus, the Sacred Heart and Merciful Jesus are three different names for the same reality: the unboundless divine love that, in Jesus, is the remedy of all evil. It is able to fill to the brim the abyss of iniquity and perdition into which we are falling. One would have to be crazy not to take advantage of this remedy! (» pg 7)

within themselves the same face in that of Our Lady and that of the Church. Then, instead of division between the Church and the pilgrims, there would be oneness, because with all their strength they will try to manifest the true face of the Church. The Church would be renewed and well on its way to the new Jerusalem where Our Lady and the Church will have the one and same face.

3. This is the time to act in the names of Our Lady and Jesus: Mk 16:15-20 (*In my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages ... they will lay hands on the sick and these will recover*). It is the time to act as the Apostles did after the Ascension of Jesus: Acts 3:6 (*In the name of Jesus the Nazorean, rise and walk*). They did not wait for Jesus to work, but they worked in the name of Jesus. The maturity of Christians and of the Church depends on this, on when the creative, saving and sanctifying power of Jesus is manifested in them and poured out onto the world.

If we have advanced on our faith walk, if we have improved in our prayer life and if we are open to God, then after 13 years the events around us should not seem strange to us. We know, as well, which means are the ones that defeat the ever-growing evil. Through these God's power is manifested. So today is not the time for walking in the dark or in fear, but in the light and power of God. Let us go then! *Fr. Tomislav*

I wish to lead you all to Jesus!

It was great joy for Mary to see many children around Her. She blesses them twice. If they are here it means they have not gone astray, that they know where their hope lies. She does not hesitate to remind them that they need to decide to live the messages. Our salvation and true peace depends on these. Her joy would be full if everyone lived by Her messages and She could present us to the Father. How many tears Our Lady sheds for us! Despite her motherly reminders there are still too many who do not want to make this decision.

On the 13th anniversary some people were expecting perhaps a word about the present, the future, our destiny or about preparation for the year 2000; and Our Lady asked us to **live Her messages, to pray more** and to hand ourselves over to Her so She can **lead us to Jesus.** Precisely because our destiny and our peace depends on this and because this is the way to prepare ourselves for the third millennium. Until we start living the way She has been asking us to live for the last 13 years, what else could She say?

Mary leads us to Jesus. She is not the author of salvation, but those who hand themselves over to Her will definitely meet Jesus, and He is our salvation.

Pray: the more you pray the more you will belong to me and my Son Jesus, instead of being *slaves of sin and death and Satan.* Mary is asking that our prayer be true prayer that transforms us into Her children, similar to Her in that we shall belong to God and be transformed in God. *P.R.*

Many people present like in pre-war times

The 13th anniversary was a lovely international feast, with people from so many different lands: from Canada to New Zealand and South Africa to Russia, including representatives of an Indian tribe. On 24 June the **peace march** from Humac to Medj. took place (15 km), with people in procession behind the Blessed Sacrament: God's people walking with their God. Vicka led the Rosary prayer.

It is estimated that 4,000 attended the march, while 15,000 attended the evening Mass. That same evening, though it was very dark, many people climbed the apparition hill to pray. Our Lady appeared to **Ivan**, just as She has been doing every Monday and Friday of this last month. She often entrusts them with special intentions, such as for the priests, peace in the Church, sinners and the youth. Before an enormous crowd, the Blessed Mother prayed this time for the conversion of sinners. She was radiant; also on the anniversary day, She appeared all dressed in gold. Marija, Ivan, Vicka and Jakov were present.

On the 25th, **Fr. Jojo** celebrated the evening Mass with 142 priests. It is estimated that between 50-60,000 people were present. A bishop from Australia was also present: Mons. Kennedy, who blessed the faithful. Many priests confessed for many hours. »

POPE DOES NOT GIVE UP the battle for life

The year of the family began with horrible satanic projects to destroy the family. The Pope, true prophet of life, keeps on fighting and suffering, and he offers his sufferance for the meeting with the world powers (Clinton's visit on 2 June):

I express my gratitude for this gift of sufferance connected to the Marian month of May. I have understood that it is a necessary gift... because the family is threatened and attacked; thus the Pope must be attacked, he must suffer, so that each family may see and the world may see that there is a Gospel of sufferance with which one must prepare the future, the third millennium of the family and of all the families. I see that it was important to bring this argument to the world powers which I must meet again and with whom I must speak. What topics can I use? I am left with the one of sufferance.

The thing that really shook people's consciences though and made the secular world happy is the **document** on world population and demographic growth produced by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. It talks about "the need to check births" so that insoluble problems do not arise..."

It was meant to be a scientific document for the Pope, but the language is not strictly scientific. It is also ethical (regarding man's behaviour) and it uses rather peremptory tones - speaking of insoluble problems - which is typical of someone who wants to convince at all costs.

The secular papers spoke about the Church practically being "penitent for its line of pro-life politics." It is indicative that this document - produced by 80 of its members (not all Catholic) back in 1991 - was published now when the Pope is fighting so hard in favour of life with the conference of Cairo in view. It is not expected that the conference bear good news for life.

It is known that birth control on a world basis will open the way to the use of contraceptives, sterilization and abortions which are contrary to the divine laws and would be an attempt on the sacredness of life. What the Church asks for is **responsible paternity** which allows the couple to use their inviolable freedom to procreate with wisdom and responsibility.

How did Catholics react? Vatican Radio said that the **authenticity of Catholic teaching does not come from the studies of an Academy, even if a Pontifical one, but gushes from the Scriptures read by the Magisterium.**

What did the Pope say? In the Angelus

» **Ivanka** also received an apparition by Mary for the feast day. She preferred remaining alone with her husband and children, without the presence of journalists and curious people who were not interested in praying.

Our Lady stayed with her for 8 minutes. Her appearance, unlike last year when She cried, was very joyful. Her message was: "My heart is open to you because many hardened hearts have opened to my Son to let Him guide them on the right way. Keep up the prayer and the fasts. Thank you for having responded in so many." After the message, Our Lady spoke to Ivanka about the secrets. (J.P.)

of Sunday 12, without wishing to point the finger at anyone, he strongly reaffirmed the gravity of sin against life. In his homily to the newlyweds, he replied indirectly as he illustrated the design God has on man and woman who made them in His own image and showed them the way to communion, which is living in love... this means keeping before your eyes the mystery of Christ in whom God has loved each one of us to the point of death.

On another occasion he said: *In Demographic politics people cannot be just numbers or considered in economical or some other prejudicial terms. It must respect and promote the dignity and the basic rights of the individual and the family.* During the Conference on populations in Mexico in '84, he warned of abusing the poor, who are made to give up their ultimate freedom by being forced to make a responsible decision of when and if to have children. On the 18th March, in his message to the UN population fund director, he said: *It should not be the intent of the governments or other agencies to decide for couples, but, rather, to create the social conditions which will enable them to make appropriate decisions in the light of their responsibilities to God, to themselves, to society and to the objective moral order.*

Ideologies which propagandize artificial birth control (be it for political or economical reasons) reduce life to nothing more than numbers. **Which organization has the right to decide how many human beings can stay in the world?** This is a revolution! God alone is Creator and Bearer of the universe; He did everything without the need of being counselled by humans, not even by the Council of the UNO! It is hypocritical to blame the evils of the world onto the fact that there are too many people in it.

Anyone can see that the evil stems from something else: the egotism of the rich countries, industrial exploitation to the detriment of the Southern parts of the world, ideological violence of the so-called "developed" civilizations, which after having destroyed the value of life within its own nations, tries to compel the "backward" world to mortify the only wealth they have: the freedom of living and transmitting life. It is crystal clear that this is satanic work!

Clear denial by another scientific body - The Pontifical Academy for Life, a scientific body wanted by John Paul II, was quick to clarify: "In view of these alarmist campaigns we feel it our duty to state that it is wrong to maintain that the world population is growing at such a rate that the imminent future will be one of insecurity and misery. Hence, it is false and contrary to natural ethics to assert that the birth rate must be drastically checked. Therefore, means such as contraception, sterilization, abortion and euthanasia are to be excluded anyway."

It also condemns the attempt to impose family planning on society based solely on an economic and utilitarian view which is indifferent to the needs of justice and which gravely violates the right of parents to procreate responsibly in a condition of effective freedom..." (21 June 1994).

Extraordinary Consistory in preparation of the year 2000 - The Pope and the 114 Cardinals reunited with him have reaffirmed their "no" to artificial methods of birth control. *The failed social policies of*

many developed countries should not be imposed onto the world's poor.

Another issue that they discussed was **unity among the Churches**: *we cannot come before Christ, the Lord of history, as divided as we have unfortunately been during the second millennium.*

"Mea culpa" (fault) of Church? During the Consistory the Pope also referred to "the acknowledgement of omissions by Christians... As she faces this Great Jubilee, the Church needs the discernment of her children's historical shortcomings and negligence with regard to the demands of the Gospel. Only the courageous acknowledgement of faults and omissions, for which Christians have in some way been responsible... can give an effective impetus to the new evangelization."

Thus the Pope was proposing a **public confession of the faults of the Church**, but the Cardinals observed how it is not the Church in herself, but the men of the Church, who have obscured her holy face.

The Consistory also discussed other important topics, such as relationships with other States (difficult dialogue with Muslims and other countries where religious freedom is denied), the growing number of martyrs, and the negative moral behaviour of mankind due to the fact that he no longer keeps the idea of temporariness of life in mind, and he lacks respect for the authorities - not just the Pope, but above all Christ: *the human will that defies the will of God leads the human person to self-destruction.* Edit. team

Support the Pope in this moment of trial

In an impassioned letter to Marian groups, Bishop Paul Hnilica writes: "Due to the gravity of the times we live in I make this appeal for prayer and loving union to support the Holy Father who, united to Christ Crucified, carries the weight of all mankind on his shoulders. Like Peter during the times of the first persecution against Christians, he is the target of an out and out persecution.

Hostile forces have declared war, against that truth that Peter bears by the will of God and that today more than ever is silenced because the entire world is immersed in falsehood. Humanity is degraded day by day. The fight against life itself is witness to this, in particular the abortions.

In this apocalyptic battle between light and dark, a light of hope shines out for all of us: the Woman dressed in the sun, the great sign, which appeared in Fatima. The Blessed Virgin came to prepare Her children for this great battle which would spare no one, neither in the east nor in the west.

Our Lady said in Fatima: *The Pope will suffer much* - and we can see this sufferance now, during the pontificate of John Paul II. A deep wound is the separation of the sister (Orthodox and Catholic) Churches. This wound has been bleeding for many centuries, and the Pope spends all his energy in the effort to restabilize unity before the beginning of the third millennium.

There is not true unity in the Catholic Church either, with divisions between the Bishops and the Pope and between priests and Bishops. Separation is what the prince of division (the devil) wants.

In Fatima, Our Lady gave us the remedy

to win this battle and re-establish peace in hearts and among men: the Consecration to Her Immaculate Heart. At the conclusion of the 2nd Christian Millennium Mary donated to the world a Pope consecrated to Her who had been chosen and prepared by Herself to become the Apostle of the Consecration, so that Mary would be present in the Church in Her role as co-redemptrix, mediatrix and advocate in favour of mankind.

Unfortunately, in Medj. and in Kibeho Mary's warnings were not taken seriously and now we can all see the tragic consequences. Things will go the same way for the whole world if we continue ignoring Mary's motherly calls.

The reason I have appealed to Marian groups all over the world is because there are three basic things that make up a Marian group: love and adoration for the Holy Eucharist, unreserved faithfulness to the Holy Father and Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. You are the great hope for the Pope and the future of the Church.

It is with this spirit that I invite you to begin a *novena* for the Holy Father. The best would be Adoration and the Rosary every day. Together, we will be united for a common and holy cause: that the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary may be realized during his pontificate and that God may grant him the strength to introduce the entire Church into the third millennium."

(Paul Hnilica, Bishop)

Fr. Andrea D'Ascanio from the *White Army*, also makes an appeal: "Time draws close. In the Church and the world Satan is causing great confusion. The unity that Jesus prayed for prior to His death urgently needs realizing. Mary is urging Her children to consecrate themselves to Her Immaculate Heart, to be united in one big army that She will guide for the last great battle against evil.

She, awe-inspiring as bannered troops (Song 6), has given us the weapon we need: the Rosary. With this She will realize the Triumph of Her Immaculate Heart. Mary will dress us with Herself and present us to the Father, and the Father will once again walk among His children to govern the nations."

A Definite NO to woman-priests. Gospel tells

On the day of Pentecost, 22 May, the Holy Father issued the apostolic letter *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*. With this letter he puts an end to every debate on woman priests. Of course, he supplies the reasons for this decision. The surprising thing in the letter is not so much the Church doctrine which has always conferred the holy orders only on men, but the **new and definite way** with which the Pope proposes this doctrine.

After declaring that *conferring the priestly order on men is not a decision of disciplinary character, but a matter that concerns the divine constitution of the Church*, he appealed to the ministry to confirm its brothers - and thus he is affirming that this provision is to be considered definite by all the faithful of the Church, and that doubts cannot surround it.

The fundamental reasons behind this doctrine, which had already been affirmed by Pope Paul VI in 1976, are based on the example of Christ, who chose his Apostles from among men only, on the unchanging

practice of the Church who imitates Christ by choosing only men, and on the living Magisterium of the Church which has always and consistently confirmed the same. Christ chose only men, not because He had succumbed to the culture and customs of Israel of that time, but because that was His free and sovereign decision. Furthermore, His choice was not a casual one, for He had spent the night in prayer (Lk 6:12) to listen to the Father's will and follow the Holy Spirit's guidance.

The fact that Mary, the Mother of God and the Church, had not received the Apostolic mission, nor that of the priesthood, clearly shows that not admitting women to the priestly order does not mean their mission is worth less or that they are being discriminated against. It does mean that God's wise plan for women is being respected. No one can deny the importance of women's roles in the history of salvation and of the Church, and no one can say that not being priests was an obstacle for women like St Agnes, St Clare, St Catherine, St Therese and many others.

On the matter, **Cardinal Ratzinger** says: "In matters of faith, the sacraments and morality, the Church cannot do as she wishes, but must follow Christ's will. For the Catholic faith, the priesthood is a sacrament and not something invented by the Church for practical reasons. Priesthood is something donated to the Church by the Lord, and thus, she is not free to remodel or change it, but must transmit it with respectful faithfulness.

The **Orthodox Church**, too, has always kept to this model of the 12 Apostles by only calling men to the priesthood. The present doubts and debates surrounding the matter come from interpreting the Holy Scriptures with a **mere historical point of view.**"

What does this mean? That "the beginning of priesthood is no longer considered as the express will of Christ, but as part of an historical process not based on an institutive will of Christ. It responds to various functions and needs of the Christian community according to the times, which can be changed to suit the times. So today, with the fall of every discrimination between men and women and fewer men becoming priests, people ask: why can't women be priests?"

The task of the Pope is not so much that of making decisions or exercising his power, but of guaranteeing obedience to the Word of God. In fact, he cannot change something that has obviously been established by Jesus Christ. "This truth is a fundamental part of the decisions made by those Anglican Bishops and priests who now feel the need to pass over to the Catholic Church. Their decision does certainly not imply a vote against women, but is an expression of faith in the limits of Church authority."

We cannot invent a personalized Church

We shall try to respond to two questions that people may now ask. They do not only concern the question of women priests, but also other truths of the Church.

1. Some may ask: *Who established that God really wanted it this way? Couldn't the primitive Church have invented it and then passed it off as a "divine project"? Who deduced from the Holy Scriptures that this is a doctrine that cannot be changed?* These questions are asked often and now we can see that there is much more to them than just the question concerning woman priesthood. The

world today is incapable of understanding the value and authority of the Church as a continuation of Christ's presence.

The teachings of the Catholic Church are based on the Holy Scriptures, on the Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church. This means that all that comes from the Bible becomes fundamental for the life of faith only when there is someone who lives by it and teaches it (Tradition and Magisterium).

One can't re-read the Bible or give it new interpretations, without considering what the Church has given us over all these centuries. Tradition speaks clear: woman priesthood is not part of God's plan.

Men and women: different roles in Church - cannot be interchanged.

2. Others may say: *why does the Catholic tradition say this? Why is the present-day civilization so incapable of accepting this doctrine?*

The first question requires a serious answer. The tasks that the Apostles received, like the priesthood, are purely masculine ones, but a well-balanced Church needs both male and female members. We all know that the fecundity of the human race depends on a man and a woman being united. The new life that is born is carried in the mother's womb and a man cannot substitute a woman in this task; and a woman cannot conceive a child without a man.

It is clear then that **some tasks are meant for men and some for women and they cannot be interchanged**, and expressions of their various responsibilities are found within the family. The Church fights so that this distinction is maintained and respected. In the same way, the union between the male component and the female component needed to form the Body of the Church ("one flesh" like matrimony) requires respect for its specific roles.

So the task of the woman is modelled on that of the Blessed Mother, without Whom nothing would have begun, and in Whom every form of spiritual and physical fecundity found its beginning. Nonetheless, Mary was not made an Apostle, yet She is Queen of the Apostles. It was next to Her that the Apostles received their definite spiritual maturation which prepared them for Pentecost.

Thus, the Catholic doctrine dignifies the woman and the man in their diverse tasks, so as to preserve all the beauty and fecundity, both spiritual and physical, of the human being. Furthermore, this is done in obedience to God's will who created man, male and female (Gn 1:27).

The difference between the sexes that the Church wants to protect is important for strengthening this reciprocal love and completing it. St Paul tells us, in fact: "In our life in the Lord, woman cannot do without man, neither can man do without woman; for as woman comes from man, in the same way man is born of woman; but both come from God" (1Cor 11:12).

Of course, when God is not part of man's life, nothing of this is accepted, and Satan is free to act and produce protests about woman priests, just as he invented the "family" made up of only men or only women. This is the umpteenth rotten fruit of a civilization by now incapable of evaluating the dignity and beauty of the man and the woman in their complementary union.

Edit. staff

13th ANNIVERSARY

Fr. Jozo says: *We did not trust enough*

In a letter to pilgrims and friends for the 13th Anniversary of the Apparitions, Fr. Jozo said, among other things:

Our Lady's latest message (of 25 May) is a call to trust Her more and live Her messages more profoundly. This is the 13th year of Her love and intercession for us and the 13th year of our lack of trust in Her.

Our Lady is calling us to have more trust in Her messages, because if we had enough trust, Her messages would bloom and give abundant fruit. The war then, would have stopped and peace would be a song in the hearts of millions of people, instead of the sorrow, suffering and sadness.

The war is a move against man, against all that is holy and beautiful, human and Christian. Today, this war tells us that we did not trust enough. For thirteen years, She kept on telling us: *I am with you and I intercede on your behalf before God. I am waiting for your hearts to open to my messages.*

Dear friends, I am writing to you on this occasion to call you here to Medjugorje, to celebrate this 13th anniversary here. In Her presence, we will experience the love and closeness of God, the blessing and grace of God's Peace - which we so badly need.

I invite you, pilgrims and those who honour Our Lady, to give the most important humanitarian aid: take Her messages and nourish the world and nourish our people.

We do not need medicine so much, though we are sick; we do not need food so much, though we are hungry; we do not need building material so much, though our homes are ruined. **Our primary need is your love for Jesus, for the Church, for the messages and for us.** All the rest will be given us in addition. For this I thank you.

Fr. Jozo Zovko

Return to Mary's way

The 13th Anniversary of the Apparitions of the Queen of Peace is upon us and we cannot thank Our Lady enough for what She has worked in our hearts. Let us not forget the wonders that God has done in us through Her. It is thanks to the grace of Medjugorje that Jesus was able to reach our hearts and make them convert.

In the times as they are we risk returning to the state of unbelief, of resistance, of untrust and of resignation! God's gifts, however, are irrevocable, which is why it is possible for us to be born again and again. This, then, is just the right moment to think back on what God has done for us and give a boost to our old enthusiasm for the things of God. The following meditation by Fr. Tomislav will help us do just that. It is taken from a catechesis for a prayer group, dated 4 January 1986.

"For people who are just curious, the messages are repetitive; they remain on the surface and there is nothing new in them. On the other hand, for people with open hearts, each message is something new, it is a step ahead.

1. Our Lady asks that we make a firm decision: to surrender ourselves totally to God and to Her. I see two very important things in this: a call: *open yourselves*, and a

level: *decide: make up your minds*. This is the first step for us to take. One must offer one's own physical capacities to the Lord; free them and give them to the Lord. In prayer groups there are many people who do not learn to talk, but this is the first step one should learn. You must decide for everything that Our Lady is asking; you must offer your bodily members to Our Lady, to the Lord, so that They can realize Their plan through you.

2. Some things are compulsory, they can't be left out. One of these is **prayer**. For each of us it must be clear that through prayer one may advance and that without prayer one does not grow. The more one prays the faster one can advance. If this decision is not clear in my heart, then I am similar to the Apostles who were filled with fear during the storm. Instead of seeing Jesus, they saw a ghost.

Our entire day must be immersed in prayer. Yes, the whole day. My most profound desire is to remain intimately close to Jesus and Our Lady. When I am far from this intimate relationship I should feel like the prodigal son who needs to return to his father's embrace as soon as possible. **This is the sense of deciding for prayer.**

3. Your decision, however, will not be complete unless you **fast**. Jesus spoke of the importance of praying and fasting. Mary, in Medjugorje, said the best bodily fast is *bread and water*. She also recommended *renouncing television programmes*. Fasting is emptying oneself, it is renouncing things so that everything in us is oriented towards God, making us able to decide. Today it is difficult to fast. Consumerism does not make fasting easy, yet you must not renounce fasting. You must be nourished by the Body of Jesus. If your nourishment is worldly food, then you will be only worldly beings. Of course, we all need being educated to learn how to fast.

4. **Silence and inner peace** are the root of prayer. Through an openness to God in silence, He can act in us. Once, as we were praying, Our Lady said: *Now you are not praying. Remain in silence and let me pass through your hearts*. After a few moments of silence, we heard another message: *Yes, now I can pass through your hearts with ease*. The silence that Our Lady and Jesus talk about is not a physical or psychic state of concentration, but it is peace, it is an inner disposition where one feels totally free and which allows Jesus to act in our hearts.

5. Within this disposition there is **humility**, and this means leaning on God and not on self. In prayer it is important to remain humbly silent, leaning on God, and placing oneself in an attitude of **service**, so He can act in us: *Here I am, the handmaid of the Lord...* **

News from the Blessed Land

* **Pentecost of grace in Notre-Dame** - I experienced a wonderful Pentecost at the Marian Conference in Notre-Dame (Indiana, USA), but I was sad to see so much negativity and fights in the various Medj. centres. (It is not surprising that the devil tries to divide people to nullify God's grace, but in this case his accomplices are using the apparitions for themselves instead of serving the cause of Christ in humility. Ed. note)

It was so lovely to see so many American people intent on praying to Our Lady and adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament - who were not attracted by the speakers. Last year Our Lady told Vicka: *let there be less talk and more prayer*. And that is how it was here. So why these wars among the *big people*? They impede the little ones from receiving grace which can be spread to others only through humility and harmony.

* **Fr. Tomislav in Medj.** - After a lengthy absence, Fr. Vlasic recently spent 8 days in the parish. We were all so proud of the sweetness and depth of this man that were such a distinguishing mark of the Medj. of the early years. We remember that during an apparition the visionaries saw Our Lady place Herself before him in an assembly to bless him and embrace him. Will he return to stay? We pray for this and now we have good reason to hope for it.

* **Father Petar's lengthy tour in the Eastern countries** - In Poland he went to Cracow and Warsaw where Our Lady's latest message was handed out after my brief testimony. It was a pleasant surprise to see the people avid for a copy. If people are indifferent to Medj. it is because they ignore the facts. When a message is explained to them their hearts fill with joy and desire to go further with the Mother by their side.

* **The French woman with MS** who came back down Apparition Hill on her own two feet last month has just given us a copy of the medical tests - and there is no trace of the disease!

It must be said that I have never seen Our Lady. Due to ill-health I did not have time to prepare for the conference in Notre Dame, but the day before we were due to leave Our Lady visited my heart during prayer. Tears swelled up in my eyes as She made me understand the love She has for Her American children, and made me see what it was She wanted them to hear from me. My every worry disappeared and the rest came easily. It was a way of telling me: *I ask you to have more trust in Me* (Her May message).

* **One pilgrim, disappointed after an »**

The Queen of Peace in Perugia

"Pray for one of my plans that must be realized soon."

The magnificent church in Perugia dedicated to the Queen of Peace was inaugurated on the 31st May amid much festivity. Fr. Zaganelli and the prayer group worked for its completion.

The day was one of prayer for the 10,000 people who came from all over Italy. The pilgrims overflowed from the church into a huge shed where a giant screen had been prepared, and into the presbytery. The bishop, Ennio Antonelli consecrated the church with a solemn rite which was transmitted by Radio

Maria.

From 2 to 4 pm prayers were said for the intentions of the pilgrims, then Vicka reminded everyone of the need to put Our Lady's messages into practice. The three rosaries followed, then Our Lady appeared to Vicka. She reported: *Our Lady appeared to be very happy. She blessed all those present and asked for prayers for one of Her plans that should be realized soon*. Our Lady also expressed Her gratitude for the Chain of Prayers said for Her intentions.

Holy Mass, concelebrated by numerous priests, concluded the day.

A General, allied to the Queen of Peace in the realm of war

Mary only reference point for unity among peoples so different
 "My faith is nourished at Eucharistic Adoration"

General Philippe Morillon was up to a few months ago the commanding officer of the UNO forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He is considered a hero of the martyred city of Srebrenica, for thanks to his personal intervention, he managed to free the 50,000 people under siege by getting the Serbs and Muslims to retreat from the city. Also the peoples from other towns which were saved thanks to his intervention affectionately called him "Uncle Philip," until he was suddenly called back to France. Negotiations with the heads of the opposing factions were nearly always held in Med. He was thus asked what he thinks of the events there.

He told François Vaine: They are perturbing. The young people who say they see Our Lady have been inviting us for 13 years to pray and work for peace. Have we been doing this enough? In Medj. I did not participate officially in any of the ceremonies for I believe one must know the decisions of the Church authorities and their eventual recognition of the apparitions. For love of the Church we need to be discreet and prudent, however this does not stop us from praying and fasting for peace.. and from living the Gospel of Jesus Christ without delay. The Virgin Mary is the Queen of Peace, Mother

» experience with the New Age (they deny the Incarnation of Christ and believe in Reincarnation) was unable to say the Rosary without feeling ill, but Our Lady, during a moment of prayer in the church, showed him how the Rosary immerses him in the life of God Incarnate: the true God. Now he no longer feels he can follow an unreal god or impersonal "energies" that save no one. He echoes Our Lady: "The Rosary is the best weapon we have for these times."

* **Jelena** has returned from America and will stay with us for 3 months. This is a wonderful gift for the pilgrims because her testimony brings peace to people's hearts and simplifies everything. It upsets her to see that for many young people God is not number one. It seems that she suffers a part of Mary's sorrows caused by this unbelieving world.

* **Ivan** has returned from the US. Laureen Murphy, his wife-to-be from Boston (they will marry 23 October next) experienced a profound and radical conversion. Before her conversion she had been Miss Massachusetts twice, and after she spent much of her time spreading the messages among the young people. Let us pray for Ivan and Laureen, for if a great difference in culture can be a wealth, it can also be cause for difficulty.

* **Vicka** is in Ireland. **Anna Lisa** and **Jakov** are expecting their first babe.

* **New film on Medj.** - A television crew of American producers remained in Medj. for several weeks between May and June for the preparation of a film that will tell the story of the beginning of the apparitions and its significance for the world.

(from the diary of Sr. Emmanuel)

of all men. Her message is for everyone.

Q. How did you actually try to be an instrument of peace in Bosnia?

A. Wherever I went I could hear people crying out: "Mir, mir" (peace, peace). I wanted to fight against the falseness of the truth. A man who is afraid is a dangerous man. Untruth and fear lead to ruin. In Bosnia old fears had been awakened and an infernal mechanism was started up. People who sow terror must be disarmed.

I remember the inhabitants of a Croatian village who had taken refuge in a forest. They told us how the Bosnians had burnt down the church and danced around the flames. We went to see; it wasn't true. We went back to tell the village people and they returned to their village. The presence of impartial witnesses is essential in a mission of peace. Peace has to be built up day by day. It takes a lot of patience.

Q. What is the greatest obstacle to peace?

A. **Man's pride.** The pride of the people who govern. Neither side wishes to be looked upon as the loser while the other one as the winner. It must be made possible for this not to happen so that new feelings of revenge are not born in people's hearts.

Q. Do you feel a bit like the Centurion in the Gospel?

A. Yes, my faith is the engine that controls all my actions. I relate to the Centurion's faith in Jesus.

Q. How do you nourish your faith?

A. Through **Eucharistic Adoration** my faith receives new life, and I receive the strength to live out my baptismal state. I am a spiritual child of Mons. Charles (rector of the Basilica of Montmartre where Eucharistic Jesus is exposed day and night for Adoration). He taught me the need to live in Jesus' company so that the grace of my baptism may blossom. Being in Jesus' company means that we are also in Mary's company. **Without Her it is impossible to live out the Christian virtues of faith, hope and love.**

Q. What role could Mary have in the Balkan conflict?

A. It seems that the common faith in the one and same God, which should bring the Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats and Muslim Bosnians closer, is not enough to stop the gunfire. The Virgin Mary, whom the Muslims venerate, could be the way of creating unity among the warring factions. This reality of a spiritual order is what keeps me hoping that peace is possible.

Q. Do you think it possible for the Pope to visit Sarajevo?

A. The Orthodox Serbs are very suspicious towards diplomatic moves by the Vatican. The relationship with the Orthodox Church is a difficult one. A visit by the Pope would be a wonderful sign.

Q. You have a lot of experience. What can you tell us about the spiritual development of soldiers during times of conflict.

A. **The devil stirs up all kinds of hate and misunderstandings.** Evil people recognize one another and are attracted to one another. This mystery of evil makes the soldiers suffer. Just as there is solidarity among the good, there is also solidarity among the bad. Often, in times of conflict, we can experience the communion of saints almost physically. The big family of believers is united in prayer and this has helped me during difficult talks with the lords of the war. If God loves us it means He leaves us

free, for without freedom, love is not possible. Let us not then rebuke God for having created us free out of love!

Q. What do you think simple mortals can do in this worldly disorder?

A. You've got to believe and dare. Believe in the real values and dare to defend them. This situation, which is a sign of the end of a time, must allow the values which formed our civilization to be reaffirmed. These are: freedom and dignity of each human being; universal solidarity. The journey towards world unity implies that each person must be what he is and be respected for what he is.

Q. Are you aware that you have become a reference point, particularly for the young people?

A. What the media have said about me is not necessarily the way I see myself. My wish is to **remain humble**, because humility is truth. Humility requires that we testify and that is what I do, particularly in my book *Believe and Dare*.

Q. In Bosnia you found a fracture point between the East and the West.. that opened up to an encounter with Islamism...

A. I believe that dialogue with the Muslims is possible. It is essential to obtain respect for the rights of minority groups; and the intransigent attitude of the Muslims will disappear when it is no longer nourished and justified by unjust acts made against them.

Q. Where are the weapons in Bosnia coming from?

A. The Yugoslav Federation had developed a strong resistance during the cold war times. Bosnia and Herzegovina, a central zone both geographically and strategically, was full of weapons and ammunition factories. They also had a powder magazine. They were well prepared for enemy invasion. I do not believe that there is a traffic of weapons in Yugoslavia.

Q. Do you hope to become a saint?

A. Yes, because this is the **vocation of all people who have received baptism.** When I think of the commitment this takes though, I feel a little frightened ... but I know we are asked only to love.

(From *Lourdes Magazine*, May 1994)

Sparks of love beneath the ashes of hate

* A few days ago a student from **Brestovsko** came to Zagreb. Brestovsko was, till not long ago, a scene of battle. She told us how life in the village is returning to normal, things are calm and both nature and life are blossoming, and visibly bearing fruit.

The **Poor Clares**, after having repaired the roof of their monastery, have received a young candidate. The Lord is visibly blessing the community which resisted during the war. The spiritual life of the village people has also received new strength.

* In **Sarajevo** a Muslim family has taken a Serb family into their home of the not-so-popular name of Milosevic. The wife is a Catholic Croatian, so that under the same roof three religions and three different nations are living together. They get on well, sharing their joys and sadness and daily bread - proof that what many think is impossible is in fact possible.

* **Love of enemies** - I recently spoke with the mother of Mate, the 16 year-old who was recently killed (see Echo 112). She told me: "It took the death of my son to waken

Rwanda: what Our Lady said in Kibeho in August 1982

"The Mother of God used very strong expressions, which are difficult to translate, to describe the sin of the world: '...The sins are more numerous than the drops of water in the ocean... The world is racing towards its ruin... The world gets more evil all the time.'

On 19 August 1982, Our Lady appeared to the young people - one at a time - with expressions of sadness, contrariness and - according to the visionaries - even anger, though on the earth it was the day of Her triumph in Heaven. Alphonsine saw the Mother of God crying. The visionaries cried and their teeth and bodies were shaking.

Their bodies fell heavily as though they were dead more than once during the apparitions, which lasted for more than eight hours without ceasing. The young people could see terrifying images: a river of blood, people killing one another, abandoned corpses, a tree in flames, an abyss flung open, decapitated heads. That day there were about 20,000 people present who have not forgotten the fear, the panic and the sadness.

Do the scenes of violence forewarn of future wars?

The message we receive from Kibeho is an urgent one, do not wait to convert." (From the book by Gabriel Maindron: *Des apparitions à Kibeho*, OEIL Editions, Paris.

"The day will come when it will be too late" That day has come!

29 October 1983: Anathalie told Our Lady: "what makes you suffer is that a day will come when we will want to love you, serve you, obey you and do as you will - but it will be **too late!**"

Well, that day has come! Cardinal Tomko during a concelebrated Mass in St Peter's for Rwanda said: "An apocalyptic vision. Over these last months Rwanda has lost 25% of its priests and hundreds of religious. Out of the 10 bishops, 3 have been killed and a fourth has been badly wounded. It is estimated that half a million have lost their lives, not to mention the faithful who are dispersed, the families fleeing or divided, and the plight of two million refugees!" We have heard of orphanages being attacked and the children

me. Before I could never find time, not even for Sunday Mass. Now I go every morning and as each day passes a growing number of Mate's friends come to visit me. They bring a lame friend, helping him climb the stairs up to our 5th floor apartment. He has found so much love that he has decided to be baptized."

Another is a refugee from Bosnia who has had no news of his family. Mate's mother does all she can to substitute his mother and make him feel at home.

The young "assassin" has not left his home since and Mate's mother has decided to visit him together with her own pastor, plus the boy's parish priest to offer him her forgiveness and her motherly love. She is worried for his spiritual health and prays for him more than for her own son. She said: "When I start praying for him my whole being is filled with peace and happiness. I must tell the whole world about this."

These are the miracles Our Lord continues to work. (fra Jerko Penava, Ogulin)

massacred; of people taking refuge in church and being slaughtered. It is sad to say that the horrific acts and the death toll are on the increase. The international society seems powerless. France is attempting to intervene but only one ethnic group will accept them.

The Pope, "deeply upset by these grave facts," warns: "These crimes are a deep blow to the human conscience! Those who plan these acts and those who execute them are committing a very serious sin, killing their brothers and sisters created in God's image. I ask everyone to listen to the voice of God and to reason: stop the violence!" (19.6.94)

This is happening in an **African country where the majority are Christian** (58% Catholic, 14% Protestant) and immediately following the **African Synod**: "the most beautiful and authentic of all Synods that I have taken part in," said Card. Etchegaray. The events confirm what was stressed by the Synod: baptisms en masse were not fruit of true conversion and inner transformation; there is a clear division between religious life and family and social life; evangelization is not directed at all the people and all of society. Today, however, Christian Africa is aiming to do precisely this.

*** Stimulating examples of reconciliation and forgiveness.** Card. Tomko told of a 60 year-old volunteer nurse, of the Hutu tribe, who chose not to abandon her patients - refugees from the Tutsi tribe - but to die with them and for them.

*** A Bishop said that among some hills, where the Tutsis are a minority, if it hadn't been for their Hutu "enemies" who hid them, none of them would have survived the attack by the government.**

*** Another moving fact:** groups of people were being led to the river to be killed, and on the way they sang hymns: they were catechumens who would have been baptized in that same river.

A letter from Burundi: "... The enemy of man has used his infernal astuteness to make Christians abandon God, their faith, the cross, confession, matrimony, Mary, sacred images and the Rosary. The demoniac swindle has borne its fruits: death and ferocious hate in men whose idols are selves and power. From this comes destruction.

In our small territory of **Ruzo**, to the south of the **river Kagera** more than 30,000 people have found refuge, together with Eucharistic Jesus. The orphans and widows see the assassins of their parents and children: refugees in the same camp or nearby - victims and assassins forced to live together. Help us with your prayers to discern the events of the last times, so we may remain anchored to Christ the rock and give hope, forgiveness and peace to those who despair.

The international organizations have been able to do nothing. Our Christians are hospitable. They are the first to offer help, but the burden is heavy. They offer their homes, food, prayers and serenity to groups of 12-25 people. The orphans and children are put up in the mission.

The Mother is asking for solidarity. Offer Holy Masses for the victims; send your donation to the parish so that it can help the most urgent cases." (Fr. Victorio Blasi) **

Little children, your love should bear all that is bitter and difficult for the sake of Jesus, who is love. (25 June 1988)

Condition for every Mission:

begin from divine love
or not even most beautiful
idea is productive

All evil surrounding religion and faith, and thus of the entire world, has its roots in a type of **schizophrenia** found in the depths of man's soul. We could call it a division between God and man, between divine love and human love. It is a division between the divine love and the rest of man. The first commandment says: **love God with all your heart, all your soul and all your strength**, and with this love we must **love our neighbour**.

If this divine love is not present in us then there is a type of schizophrenia in us. It depends on each one of us to discover the depth of this schizophrenia, which is the root of all our problems. It shows up in little things and is greatly influential. It shows up in big things and is destructive.

This schizophrenia is always in us when we have, for example, good ideas but they are not united to the divine and pure love. You know only too well that in a debate where divine love is not present, you can argue with logic, justice, human laws and even religious laws (as the pharisees did), but all you will produce is death in you and around you - like the pharisees, the sadducees and the High Priest.

Inside of us there must be communion, a perfect unity between the divine love, our ideas and our actions. This happens only when love is top on our list of priorities. Things need re-ordering in us, with others and between them and us. **At the top of this order there must be love.** I dislike very much the expression: I love you, but I think differently to you. This is being cold and indifferent. It is deceptive.

Divine love does not leave anyone this way, not even a thief on a cross or a prostitute! The Love of God suffers on the Cross, not for physical pains, but because someone is not saved. With God's love we are never separated from the other (in our hearts). Our brother is more important than any other interest or idea, no matter how right these may be.

The love of God never places an idea or an aim in first place, even if this concerns someone that needs correcting. The action does not come before divine love. **For us, divine love must come unconditionally first, then the action can follow.** The idea of separating the action, idea or aim from love and making them more important is the same as crucifying Jesus and the love in us.

But when the divine love is our prime concern and it unites ideas and actions to itself, the **Holy Spirit is present in us with all His power!** Do not go looking for the Holy Spirit as if He were a ghost, or something that lives up in the clouds, asking yourself: will he come or won't he come? Instead, you must allow the Holy Spirit to act in you. He is jealous and wishes to act with all His power. Remove this schizophrenia in the little things and the big things, and the Holy Spirit, in both the little and big things, will do marvels, as only God, in His omnipotence knows how.

This journey must be clear to us, and we must decide to start upon it. Otherwise, even belonging to a new community with the beautiful name of "all yours," is **pharisaical** - no different to being part of a new sect. Our call is to be spiritually healed and to give Jesus as medicine to the Church and the entire world. We have been called to unite in our hearts - i.e., in the Heart of Our Lady - **the whole Church and all mankind.**

Our Lady has an intention for you: from now on you must offer yourself every day for

the sake of your own country. All of you, within yourselves, must defeat the spirit of division, the spirit that is causing havoc and destroying your country. Within you and among you the Holy Spirit must be present, the schizophrenia must be removed from you. And wherever you are, you must embrace your country with this love. Do not think of any other task. If you will carry out this task in your hearts and among you then you will have done everything, you will become part of the regal priesthood. Do this. This is your mission.

Let this be your life; you are a part of this fraternity, live for the sake of this fraternity, and the spirit of love will enter its members.

Each brother and sister must be capable of transmitting, of generating other members. If anyone cannot transmit this love it is because this love is locked up within that person. Each mother who is a member of this fraternity can transmit this love to her family. Each person can find other members, very many members.

When you wish to do apostolate, begin on this journey. **This way is contrary to all the human missions.** Men set off on missions to gather up votes; to collect money for associations or political parties; in a search to find wise, strong, able or beautiful people. Your mission is different. Go up to a brother who suffers and ask him: "Give me your sufferance, your pain. I will take them upon myself. I offer myself for you." If in your hearts you have decided to take this step, you will remove the sadness and the suffering from that person. He will not be healed in his body - we have said that this is not the way of our mission - but his soul will start living. Do not ask for anything else.

Ask only for his sufferance and tell him: "It is precious for me, you do not know what a treasure I have in me." Take that sufferance upon yourself and take it to Jesus. You'll see that you'll be able to work in your family, in the place where you work. Not everyone will respond; not even to the call of Jesus did everyone respond! Those, however, who are worthy of God's Kingdom will respond.

Depart for your mission, but remember: your departure will be possible only if you remove that basic schizophrenia from your hearts every day before the Lord.

You might say: "But our daily trials?" Yes, there are daily trials that you must defeat. These are the hills and mountains placed before you so they may be moved, overcome. This is to strengthen the love in you, so that you can get over your schizophrenia even better. If you are unable to handle your daily trials it means that in the depth of your heart there is still a bit of that schizophrenia that we have spoken about. This is part of those daily tests that make up this journey. This is your mission.

What is the Lord entrusting you with today? Is He entrusting you with a little task if He entrusts you with your country - with all your country? It is a very big task! It is a cross that not even the men of politics or the Church know how to solve; so don't expect your life to be without trials.

God entrusts [you with] a task, but He also entrusts [you with] a power that greatly exceeds that task. When God entrusts [you with] a task it is because He loves [you] very much. He must love you very much if He entrusts you with the lands and continents!

If you make this decision in your hearts, your many questions and doubts will disappear. Joy and peace will overflow from your hearts.

My wish is that you depart with joy and gratitude; go in the light and the peace [of God]. I desire that from today the simple prayer of St Francis be alive in all of us.

(Discourse to fraternities - Fr. Tomislav Vlasic)

MONTH OF The Most Precious Blood

We are partial to the old calendar, where the 1st July was dedicated to the feast of the Most Precious Blood (the votive Mass can still be celebrated anyway). After the Council, this feast was liturgically absorbed by the feast of Corpus Christi, now known as the Body and Blood of the Lord. Apart from the reasons, not always convincing, that made the so-called experts reduce the number of feast days, there is without a doubt merit to be drawn for redeemed souls in celebrating the price of their salvation, as distinguished from the Eucharist which is their nourishment. Also at the beginning of Hebrew tradition the blood of the lamb, spread on the architraves of the doors as a sign of salvation, held a special place which was different to the lamb they would eat during the Paschal meal.

We can honour the Blood of Christ during the month of July with the seven offerings and the litanies of the Most Precious Blood, which Pope John re-discovered and highly recommended. He saw in St Gaspard del Bufalo the *glory of the roman clergy and the greatest of all apostles of the devotion to the Precious Blood of Jesus*.

Saint Gaspard del Bufalo

"spiritual live-wire":

bandits and Freemasons bend down
before Precious Blood

Gaspard was born in Rome on 6 January 1786 and while still a young boy he was so anxious to work for the salvation of souls that he innocently tried to run away from home and die as a martyr among the unfaithful. When still a student of the Roman College he offered spiritual and material assistance to people in need, and when he became a priest, at the age of 22, on 31 July 1808, he worked untiringly for the working class, in particular for the carters and farmers who deposited their hay in the Vaccino field (now the Roman Forum).

In the meantime, Pope Pius VII was made prisoner of Napoleon. A year later, on the 13th June 1810, when the priests were forced to vow fidelity to the Emperor, Gaspard refused, saying: *I cannot, I must not, I do not want to*. He was thus condemned to exile and imprisonment which lasted 4 years. During that time he was inspired to found a family of Missionaries of The Most Precious Blood.

When he returned to Rome after the fall of Napoleon, he offered himself as a servant to the Pope, who ordered Gaspard to work with the people to restore religious and moral order in Italy. Gaspard abandoned everything to dedicate himself entirely to this project. He chose to use the Most Precious Blood as the means to obtain the conversion of sinners and to weaken the spirit of impiety. He worked with devotion to defend the Immaculate Conception, and he chose Our Lady of the Chalice to be his guide. With Her help he worked prodigies and witnessed unexpected conversions.

15 August 1815: he founded the *Congregation of the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood*. Many saintly persons joined, including John Merlini, Giovanni Mastai-Ferretti, who would become Pope Pius IX, and Bishops and Cardinals who took part in his missions. The congregation of nuns, perpetual adorers of the Blessed Sacrament, was instituted 20 years later, but starting from 1808 his apostolate was supported by the *Pious Union of the Most Precious Blood* which started up in many parts of Italy and abroad.

The works of this angelic soul, marked by uncommon sufferance and blessed by God with frequent supernatural manifestations, was enormously efficacious. Wherever he passed, faith and Christian piety blossomed; feelings of hate and immorality ceased; people converted; infamous books were burnt and people stopped blaspheming. St Vincent Strambi, who accompanied Gaspard in some of his missions, called him a *spiritual live wire*; the people called him an *Angel of peace*.

He stood up with great courage against the secret societies, in particular the Freemasons, who threatened and assaulted him, but he always remained miraculously unharmed, and he did not cease to openly preach against these sects. Whole lodges of Freemasons were converted and even some sectarians. For this he was called "*hammer*" of the sectarians.

Another plague of the Papal States was brigandage: this began as a reaction to the French occupation and then to social injustices, but it degenerated into organized crime. The brigands descended from their hide-outs in the mountains to commit robbery, violence and revenge. In vain the Popes tried to find a remedy to the problem, but it was not till Leo XII entrusted the risky job to Gaspard that peace and safety was restored to Rome.

St Gaspard died in Rome in 1837 at the age of 51 after much fatigue and penance. St Vincent Pallotti saw his soul ascend into heaven like a luminous star.

His body rests in St Mary in Trivio near the Trevi Fountain. Pope John XXIII visited his tomb in 1963. A part of his body is now kept in a precious urn in Albano Laziale which receives continuous visits by missionary students. Ten years after his death, Pius IX instituted the feast of the Most Precious Blood on the 1st July in thanks for the end of the revolution and for his liberation from Gaeta.

From the writings of the Saint:

This devotion is essential for the Church which was *bought by Jesus' Blood*. God had the Hebrews paint their doors with blood so they could be freed from vengeful swords; and he was alluding to that means of eternal salvation that would have freed souls from the slavery of hell. The Apostle warns us:

If the blood of goats and bulls can sanctify those who are defiled so that their flesh is cleansed, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works to worship the living God? (Hb 9). And St Bernard: *The Blood of Christ cries out like a trumpet, and St Thomas: The Blood of Christ is the key to Paradise. How? With the Blood of his Cross, He pacifies the beings of the earth and of the skies.*

Sinners horribly abuse It and the Lord says: *what use is my Blood?* Let there be then those who obtain for this precious blood an attitude of solemn adoration that will compensate such ungratefulness, and the people will know of the marvels that are derived from this blood; and they will know that our faith consists in the value we give to the Blood of Jesus.

In fact, the prophetic oracles, the prophecies and the sacrifices of the old alliance refer to this: *In wine he washes his garments, his robe in the blood of grapes* (Gen 49:11). What did Moses do? *He took the blood and sprinkled it on the people saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you."* (Ex 24:8) *Everything is purified by blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness* (Hb 9:22). * *

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

"Do not multiply vain words" Give up religious fetishes

One of our translators writes to inform us of the sad spectacle of **religious formalism** which is a deformation of true piety in people who probably don't even realize what a heavy burden they have made for themselves. What they do is commit themselves to a series of prayer formulas, various devotional prayers and messages that they collect along the way. They become tense and anxious about saying them all and are unable to put any of them aside, as if they were sacred laws. They are accumulating weights, but Jesus says His yoke is *easy and his burden is light* (Mt 11:29). Often, these weights are imposed on us by modern scribes and pharisees who present their messages as though they were saviours (cf. Mt 23:4).

By not saying them all we will not upset anyone, and it is not by saying them all that our merit in heaven will grow. Jesus says: *In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him* (Mt 6:7).

Children who have been freed of burdensome laws have a different spirit. *You did not receive a spirit of slaves, but the spirit of children...* (Rom 5). God's Kingdom is not a question of *formulae, foods, days, months or years* (Col 2), but *justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit* (Rom 14:7).

You made the decision to follow the *perfect law of freedom* and the light that helped you see and convert, so what more do you want? The "extra" prayers cannot be compared with the liturgical hours, the Holy Mass, the Eucharist, the mysteries of the Passion, the Rosary, pilgrimages, spiritual exercises and retreats. Are these not enough? Satan is the one who encourages this tortuous dependence to make us lose the masterly way of prayer which gives us peace and helps our faith and love grow. *Fr.A.*

From L'Aquila: "Don't give up. The Echo is an instrument that Mary uses to unite the faithful all over the world to the Pope. You cannot imagine the good it does. Even if you have to suffer, offer it, keep on going and think of the Pope. I travel the world and wherever I go I see the Echo in its various languages." (Fr. Andrea D'Ascanio from the *White Army*)

From Surrey, England: I thank you and your team of helpers for your tireless work for Jesus and Mary on behalf of souls. There are many beautiful magazines, that spring from Medj., but for me, the Echo is the one which I look forward to the most, which nourishes my soul the most. May God continue to pour out His Holy Spirit upon you all to continue with love, courage and strength this most essential apostolate. In the Heart of Jesus and Mary, *June*.

Solidarity

The various aid deliverers advise that there is still much need of the various supplies, so let us continue helping them with our prayers and solidarity. Contact your nearest Caritas or Medj. Centre. It is now important to commence construction of **permanent structures** for the future of these devastated lands.

1. The Caritas group from Brescia, together with Fr. Leonard Orec, recently went from »



Vicka in ecstasy in the church dedicated to the Queen of Peace in Perugia

» Medj. to Sarajevo by a donkey trail over Mt. Igman to deliver aid (the normal road was still occupied by the Serbs). Together with the local authority they discussed and agreed upon the idea of opening up a general clinic in a building in good condition in a central location where a pharmacy is already located. There is no shortage of doctors or nurses, but they are in need of equipment. Contact Fr. Leonard for information.

Bishop Puljic, on behalf of all the Bishops of Croatia and B-H, expressed his sorrow at the destruction of the Bosnian dioceses in Sarajevo and Banja Luka: two thirds of the faithful are now refugees in other territories, 50% of the churches are destroyed and about 30-40% are damaged. Over the entire territory the Catholics are ill-treated, persecuted and forced to leave. Their rights as citizens and human beings are not respected.

In Croatia the Bishops are not allowed to visit the territories occupied by the Serbs. They invoke comprehension and solidarity of Christians in Europe, that this sorrowful situation may soon change for the better.

2. **House of the Disabled** of former Yugoslavia has been founded in Split by Fr. Leonard Orec and run by the monks of Medj., to assist the numerous young people who are suffering. They ask for support so that the house may continue offering them assistance.

3. Fr. Jozo's initiative for **Sponsorship of war orphans** of Bosnia-Herz. and Croatia - contact: Matteo Rossi, via delle Grazie - C.P. 54, 54100 Massa, Italy. ph/fax: 0585-43653

* **The Hospital of Mostar** is in need of supplies and equipment.

ECHO IN OTHER LANGUAGES

Italian: Eco di Medj., C.P. 149, 46100 Mantova, Italy. **English:** Echo of Medj., Cas. Post. 27, I-31030 Bessica (TV), Italy. **French:** Echo de Medjugorje, 18 Allée Thévenot, F-39100 Dole, France. **German:** Echo aus Medj., Via C. Balbo 3, I-36015 Schio (VI), Italy - fax 0445-575856. **Spanish:** Roger Watson, Fermo Posta centrale, I-22100 Como, Italy. **Catalan:** Amics de Medj., c.Carme 11 baixos, E-08700 Igualada-Catalonia, Spain. **Portuguese:** a) Gilberto Correia, rua de Brito 24, 4915 Vila Praia de Ancora, (ph.911181), Portugal; b) Servos da Rainha, Caixa p. 02576, 70279-970 Brasília DF, Brazil. **Dutch:** Int. Medj. Comité afd. Nederland-Belgie, Misericordieplein 12C, NL-6211 XK Maastricht, Holland. **Polish:** Czesława Mirkiewicz, ul. Ign. Krasickiego 21a/3, PL 30-515 Krakow-Podgorze, Poland. **Russian:** Dom Marii, Plotnikov 3, 121003 Moscow, Russian Federation - fax 007095-2415057. **Magyar:** Fraternitas, 1399 Budapest, p.f. 701/85 Hungary - fax 36-2176183. **Romanian:** Ecoul din Medj., P.O.B. 41-132, Bucharest, Romania. **Reduced editions:** **Greek:** Soeur Despina de

la St Croix, 69 Rue Epirou, Agia Paraskave, 15341 Athens, Greece. **Czech:** Medzugorské ozveny, Ilbenstädter, Str.6, D-60385 Frankfurt, Germany; Albanese: Jehona e Medjugorje, L.1p.10, LAC, Albania
Distributors: USA: Peter Miller, POB 2720-230, Huntington Beach CA 92647 - ph. 714-9637240, fax 9631432. Giovanna Ellis, 9809 Stoneybrook Dr., Kensington MD 20895 - ph. 301-5883198. **Canada:** Giuseppe Bozzo, 8324 Nicolas Leblanc, Montreal Que H1E 3W5 - ph. 648-3420. **Spain:** José L. Lopez de S. Roman, Ap.246, Palencia, Spain. **Australia** (all editions): Medjugorje Sentinel, P.O.B. 746, Pennant Hills NSW 2120 - fax 02-9807806.

ECHO IS FREE - it lives on your donations. Personal cheques accepted. Mail to: Echo di Medj., C.P. 149, I-46100 Mantova, Italy.

Family news

We are moved by the support we receive from our readers, both moral and material. In particular we thank the readers of the **French** and **German** editions for the big financial help they donate to us each month.

700,000 copies of our little bulletin is now being produced each month. That's the total of the 13 editions (the five in the principal languages that we publish, plus the other eight published by initiative of individuals in their own countries). And that is without counting the reduced editions. In **Canada**, our friend Michele Cacchione produces 7,000 copies of the French edition per month in his Arts-O-Graph studio, plus 1,000 copies of the English edition. Requests continue to grow for copies of the **German** edition, thanks to the untiring work of Otto Muller.

Though this brings us great joy, we are indeed sorrowed to say that for the moment we are forced to **suspend** publication of Echo for reasons already given (Echo 109). We intend putting Our Lady to the test, from Whom we would like a clear answer for our problems. This does not mean that we will stop publication, just that for the moment we are going to wait until we are able to offer a better service for all Mary's children.

May the Most Precious Blood of Jesus and the glorious Heart of Mary help us sanctify the months of July and August, which in the Northern hemisphere are summer months and thus time of rest for many. Thus I wish you a peaceful rest, in body and spirit.

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit I bless you all.

In Angela