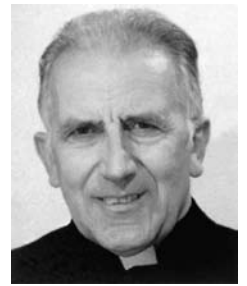




Echo of Medjugorje

November-December 2013 - Edited by: Eco di Maria, Via Cremona, 28 - 46100 Mantova (Italia) - Year 29, no. 11/12
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

229



Fr. Angelo Mutti
founder Echo of Medjugorje

THE MEANING OF LIFE!

Message to Mirjana,
2nd September 2013

"Dear Children, I love you all. All of you, all of my children, all of you are in my heart. All of you have my motherly love and I desire leading you all so that you will know the joy of God.

This is why I call you: I need humble apostles who, with an open heart, accept the Word of God and help others to comprehend the meaning of their life through the word of God. To do this my children, you must - through prayer and fasting - listen with the heart and learn to subject yourselves. You must learn to reject everything that distances you from God's word and to yearn only for that which draws you closer.

Do not be afraid. I am here. You are not alone. I pray to the Holy Spirit to renew you and to strengthen you. I pray to the Holy Spirit that as you help others, you also may be healed. I pray that through Him, you may become God's children and my apostles."

[With great concern, Our Lady added:]
"For the sake of Jesus, for the sake of my Son, love those whom he has called and yearn for the blessing from the hands which He alone has consecrated. Do not permit evil to come to reign. I repeat anew: Only with my shepherds will my heart triumph. Do not permit evil to separate you from your shepherds. Thank you."

It is made clear to us through this message that Mary comes to us at Medjugorje to remind us who we are, from where we come and to where we are destined, that we might be in communion with God. The fruits of Mary's presence have already matured and continue to mature within our hearts.

Yet, our response to this call is still not enough. We have to carry within our hearts this message and learn to listen with the heart, and learn to refuse all that distances us from God, and learn to yearn after only that which brings us closer to God.

We rejoice at knowing that Mary is with us to accompany us as we journey on this path. §



Message of 25 September 2013:

"Dear Children, Also today I call you to prayer. May your relationship with prayer be daily. Prayer works miracles in you and through you; therefore my children, may prayer be joy for you. Then, your rapport with life will be deeper and more open, and you will understand that life is a gift for each of you. Thank you for responding to my call."

Prayer Works Miracles!

May your relationship with prayer be daily, says Our Lady. If it were not, it could not nourish our souls or sustain us in difficult times; it could not shelter us in the storms or be refuge for us.

Prayer works miracles in us and through us, says Our Lady. Therefore, prayer is not something we produce ourselves, but it originates Elsewhere and receives its power from Someone Else.

With prayer, our soul is lifted up to God, says the Catechism. Thus, it is not the eloquence of our words, but the purity of our heart that can make prayer work. **When we pray with the Rosary in our hands**, what we ought to do is surrender up to God our thoughts and worries, so that prayer can become for us an oasis of peace and love where we are reconciled with God. *Prayer works miracles in us and through us, therefore my children, may prayer be for you joy!* These are Mary's encouraging words. §

(Comments to messages by Nuccio Quattrocchi)

Message of 25 October 2013:

"Dear Children, Today I call you to open yourselves to prayer. Prayer works miracles in you and through you. Therefore, my children, in the simplicity of your heart seek from the Most High that He give you the strength to be God's children, and that Satan not agitate you like branches agitated by the wind. My children, decide anew for God and seek only His will, and then you will find joy and peace in Him. Thank you for responding to my call."

Seek the Father's Will!

Today in particular we live in a world caught within the spires of a satanical plot that confuses good with evil, true with false, divine with demonic. In a tangled knot of half truths and subtle lies, of false peace that broods war and of division dusted with fraternal conviviality, it is difficult for everyone, including priests, to be disentangled.

The battle between the darkness and the light is real! Our Lady's presence reminds us that Jesus Christ is the Victor; but we must close ranks around Our Lady to put her suggestions and calls into practise by living them firsthand.

Today I call you to be open to prayer, we are asked. It is not a request to recite a prayer, but to be open to prayer. That is, let the heart and soul open up to the Holy Spirit so He can fill us; for He alone can truly pray in us and for us.

Prayer is not a magical formula, and not even a product of our efforts. **Prayer is the Holy Spirit acting in us if we allow Him** and if we desire it. It is then that our prayer can become alive and powerful and be able to work miracles in and around us.

What should we ask in prayer? Our Lady suggests that we renew our decision to belong to God and to seek his will. After all, this is what we pray for in the Lord's Prayer.

Then, we will find peace and joy in Him. §

We cannot be Christian without the love of Christ, without living this love, without recognizing it, without nurturing this love

The Pope celebrated his Mass this morning, 31st October 2013, in the St. Sebastian Chapel near the tomb of Bl. John Paul II inside St. Peter's Basilica, where a group of Polish faithful gather to celebrate the Eucharist every Thursday. During his homily he commented the daily reading of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans in which the apostle of the peoples speaks of his love for Christ, and of St. Luke's Gospel in which Jesus weeps over Jerusalem for not understanding Christ's love.

Following is an excerpt of that homily:

«The apostle of the peoples, St. Paul, lived through many difficulties, including persecution, illness and betrayal; and Pope Francis noted that **"the love of Christ"** was central to his life and sustained him through it all. He went on to say that without recognizing and allowing that love to grow in us, we cannot be true Christians. ***"The Christian is one who feels loved by the Lord, with that beautiful gaze, loved by the Lord and loved until the end. The Christian feels that his life has been saved by the Blood of Christ. And this is what love is: a relationship of love."***

The Pope continued by contrasting this attitude with the image of the sorrow Jesus experienced when he looked on Jerusalem, which didn't understand his love. The Pope said the Lord's love is like that of a mother hen who wants to gather her chicks under her wings, but Jerusalem ***"didn't understand God's tenderness,"*** which is the opposite - he said - of how Paul felt when he encountered God's love. It is as if we say: "Yes, God loves me, God loves us, but in an abstract way, it is something that doesn't touch my heart, and I organize my life the way I want...", which reflects the lack of trust in God and his love.

"Jesus' heart cried out: 'Jerusalem, you are not faithful, you have not allowed yourself to love, and you have entrusted yourself to many idols that promised you everything, they said that they'd give you everything, and then they abandon you.' Jesus suffered because his love was not accepted, and not received. (...) Before us we have the image of Saint Paul, who remains faithful to the love of Christ until the end, and who, even when faced with his weakness and sinfulness, draws strength from the love of God which he encountered in Jesus Christ."

"On the other hand - said the pontiff - we have Jerusalem, which is unfaithful and which does not accept the love of Jesus. But even worse is this half love: with a half-hearted 'yes,' and a half-hearted 'no,' according to what is more convenient."

"In the face of these two images what



can we do?" asked the Pope, who challenges us to ask ourselves: "Am I more like Paul or more like Jerusalem? Is my love for God as strong as Paul's, or is my heart tepid, like that of Jerusalem?"

"May the Love, through the intercession of Blessed John Paul II, help us to answer this question!" »

(Fonte: news.va)

Don't be tepid Christians!

On the 24th October 2013, Pope Francis spoke of the "logic of the before and the after" to help us understand how not to be tepid Christians, or worse, hypocrites. Making reference to the Letter to the Romans (6:19-23) in which St. Paul tries to help us understand the enormity of the mystery of our redemption, the apostle is aware that it isn't easy to comprehend such a mystery. So to help us understand Pope Francis spoke of the "logic of before and of after: Before Jesus and after Jesus."

"The blood of Christ has re-created us; has creates us anew. If our life before - with our body, our soul, our habits - followed the way of sin and evil; now, after this re-creation, we must make the effort of walking in the way of justice and sanctification! It is Paul who uses the word sanctification. We are all baptised; our parents pronounced the act of faith on our behalf" [and now] "we must make this faith ours by allowing it to determine our way of living."

However, the Pope admitted: "We are weak, and we often sin." So can we be on the way of sanctification, he asks. "Yes, and no," he says, explaining it this way: "If you get used to a life that is half and half; if you say: I believe in Jesus Christ but I want to live the way I like, then this cannot sanctify you. It would be counter productive. But if you say, "I am a sinner; I am weak, whilst walking towards the Lord, and you say, 'Lord, give me the strength, the faith; you can heal me if you want - through the Sacrament of Reconciliation - then also our imperfections become a part of this journey of sanctification."

So there is always this "beforehand and afterwards". "First there is the act of faith; before accepting Jesus Christ who re-created us with His blood we were on the way of injustice. Afterwards, we are on the way of sanctification. But we have to take this seriously. This means doing

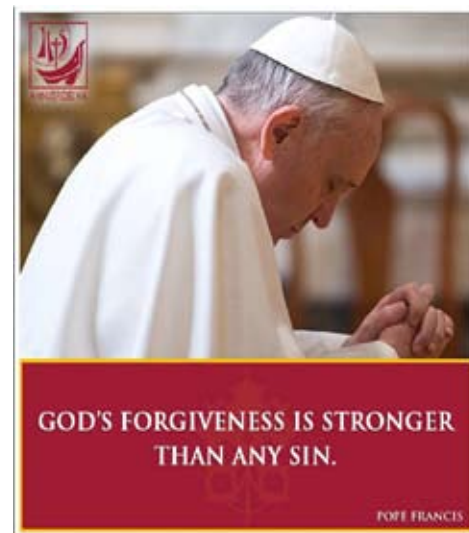
works of justice. Above all: adoring God, and then: do what Jesus advises us to do, which is to help others, feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, visit the sick, the imprisoned. These are the works which Jesus did during his lifetime. They are works of justice, of re-creation. When we feed the hungry, we re-create hope within these people. But if we accept the faith without living it, we are nothing but nominal Christians."

"Without this awareness of the "before and after", our christianity is of no good to anyone," says the Pope. "Worse than this, it becomes hypocrisy! Calling oneself Christian, then living as a pagan is hypocrisy. Unless we take this sanctification seriously, we become like those whom the Pope calls tepid Christians. "It's a bit like our mothers used to say: watered-down Christians; with a varnishing of Christianity, but within there is not a real conversion, there is not the conviction of Paul for whom the only important thing was to earn Christ and be found in him. This was Paul's passion; and it ought to be the passion for every Christian: leave everything that distances us from Christ. And do everything new. Everything is new in Christ. Everything is new."

Is this possibile - asked the Pope. "Yes," he replied, and explained: "Paul did it. Many Christians did it and are doing it. Not only the saints, the ones we know, but also the anonymous saints, all those people who live their Christianity seriously. Perhaps the question we can ask ourselves today is this: 'Do I want to live my Christianity seriously?' Do I believe that I have been re-created by the blood of Christ; and do I want to live out this re-creation till the day I see the new city of God, the new creation? Or am I a bit half-way [with a foot either side] of this journey?"

"Let's ask St. Paul to give us the grace to live as serious Christians, and to truly believe that we are sanctified by the blood of Christ!"

[Fonte: L'Osservatore Romano]



The QUEEN OF PEACE Reconciling Science and Faith

It is as if God, through Mary, wants to lead men of science to acknowledge God by putting them face to face with the supernatural. How is the Queen of Peace doing this? Of course, the way is the same that God has always used, which is the way of **sublime humility**, so characteristic of the Incarnation with which our Lord Jesus Christ placed himself into the hands of men - as if making himself an object for experiment. Science has its methods and its needs, and its object is that which can be experimented.

Our Lady of course has not appeared to place herself under the direct control of scientific observation. Yet, at Medjugorje, Our Lady's apparitions are so punctual as to **allow that experiments be made** on the visionaries. Science has indeed been interested in the event, and has been able to plan and conduct its experiments; coming to the conclusion that the visionaries are healthy subjects, haven't lied, that the ecstasy they experience is real... and that during their ecstasy their senses are functional yet remain insensible to external stimuli, making them come to the conclusion that there does not seem to be a plausible explanation on a natural plane.

Since the beginning of the apparitions, numerous men of science have made their way to Medjugorje. Their conclusions were published in a scientific dossier on Medjugorje; and this was handed over to the Holy See and to colleagues around the world, in an interesting and eloquent scientific discourse. Even the fact that science takes this interest in the supernatural is interesting in itself. But even more interesting is that the initiative of it all is actually due to God, and to his love of mankind.

Excerpted from "Medjugorje, speranza del terzo millennio" by Padre Massimo Rastrelli S.J. 2010 Michael Edizioni Treviso.

**Virtues are formed by Prayer
Prayer preserves temperance. Prayer
suppresses anger. Prayer prevents
emotions of pride and envy. Prayer
draws into the soul the Holy Spirit,
and raises man to Heaven.**

(St. Ephraem of Syria)

I bind unto myself today
The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.

I bind unto myself today
The power of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, His might to stay,
His ear to hearken to my need.

The wisdom of my God to teach,
His hand to guide, His shield to ward,
The word of God to give my speech,
His heavenly host to be my guard.

THE CHURCH "FAMILY OF GOD" IN THE TEACHINGS OF POPE FRANCIS AND IN THE MESSAGES OF MEDUGORJE



In the message of the 2nd November 2013, Our Lady called us once again to have a personal relationship with the Father, because this will deepen the relationship we have with others. In the message, Our Lady referred to "the community of my children, of my apostles."

This reference to the community dimension of the Christian life is frequent in her messages, and one would say even a method with which Our Lady develops her teachings. From the beginning there has been an ecclesial perspective, which has grown over time. At first there was a small group (of 6 visionaries), then a prayer group, then the parish, and since January 1987 her words have been addressed to all humanity.

With this we already see a determining criteria for a Christian life that Our Lady has reminded us of since the beginning: "Above all, begin to love your family, and love each other in your parish, and then you will be able to love and welcome all those who come here" (13 December 1984). Christian love calls to be verified in the environment closest to us, there where people are together. Similar to this message is another given some years later: "I want for you to comprehend that my wish isn't to realize here just a place of prayer, but that it also be where hearts can meet" (25 July 1999).

However, 2011 saw the start of this particular teaching: "Dear children, today I call you to be reborn in prayer and to become, together with my Son, and through the Holy Spirit, a new people; a people that knows that when it has lost God it has lost itself; a people that knows that despite all the suffering and trials, with God it is safe and saved. I call you to gather together as the family of God and to be strengthened with the Father's strength. As individuals, my children, you cannot stop the evil that wants to reign in the world to destroy it. But through God's will, all of you together united to my Son, you can change and heal the world" (2 Aug. 2011). "Dear children, the Father has not left you alone. His love is immense! It is his love that leads me to you to help you know him so that everyone, through my Son, may call him 'Father' with all your heart, and that you might be a people within the family of God. However, my children, do not forget that you are not in this world just for yourselves, and that I do not call you here just for yourselves" (2 Nov. 2011).

"People" and "family" of God are expressions that unequivocally lead us back to the Church; and this means that

the Queen of Peace wants us to realize that we belong to this one people: "Though we are many, we are one body" (1 Cor 10:17), and that in particular we may experience this "one people" so we can truly feel the belonging to the Church as an indispensable condition for our Christian identity.

This is the same concern that emerges from the teachings of Pope Francis. The Holy Father often insists on the need for us all to learn from each other especially in the life of faith. This is what he said on 30th October last: "Our faith needs the support of the others, especially during difficult times. If we are united, our faith becomes strong. How nice it is to sustain each other in this marvellous adventure of the faith! I say this because the tendency to close oneself up in private has influenced also the religious environment, so that it often happens that it becomes difficult to ask for spiritual help" (catechesis 30 Oct.).

For a long time the Pope has been calling us to this inseparable union between faith, Christian identity and the sense of belonging to the Church to be understood as the fraternal life and journeying together. In one of his reflections at a meeting for priests in Buenos Aires in 2008, he explained this very clearly, and even though he is addressing priests in this particular piece, it is meaningful for every baptized faithful. "It is appropriate that we do not forget that identity is a sense of belonging. The priest belongs to the People of God; from where he has come and to where he is sent! Faith in Jesus Christ comes to us through the Church community which gives us a family: the universal family of God within the Catholic Church. Not having this sense of belonging leads to isolation of self. When the conscience is detached from this itinerary of the People of God it produces one of the worst damages a priest could undergo, because it strikes him in his identity, since his belonging to God's People is thus diminished either partially or selectively."

The Pope points out, however, that belonging to the Church is not like taking part in an assembly or an organization, because it is founded on a sacrament.

The Church IS communion with God, it is familiarity with God, it is a communion of love with Jesus Christ and with the Father in the Holy Spirit. The Pope wants us to understand how the Church is born from a nucleus that Jesus calls to himself. "When we read the Gospels we see how Jesus gathers round himself a small community who is open to his word, who follows his word, who shares his journey, and who becomes his family; and with this community Jesus is preparing and building up his Church" (catechesis 29 May). This is the same thing to which Our Lady has called us when she spoke to us as 'community of my children, of my apostles..'

Marco Vignati, Comunità Casa di Maria, Roma

Message to MIRJANA, 2 Oct. 2013

"Dear Children, I love you with a motherly love and with a motherly patience I wait for your love and communion. I pray that you may be a community of God's children, of my children. I pray that as a community you may joyfully come back to life in the faith and in the love of my Son.

My children, I gather you as my apostles and I teach you how to bring others to come to know the love of my Son; how to bring to them the Good News, which is my Son. Give me your open, purified hearts and I will fill them with the love for my Son. His love will give meaning to your life and I will walk with you. I will be with you till the encounter with the Heavenly Father.

My children, only those who walk towards the Heavenly Father with love and faith will be saved. Do not fear; I am with you.

Have trust in your shepherds as my Son trusted them when He chose them, and pray that they may have the strength and the love to lead you. Thank you."

The Community of the Children of God

The messages that come to us from Medjugorje are addressed not to a single person but to a community of people. In today's message **Our Lady has specifically called us** a community of God's people, of her children. Initially, the messages were addressed to the Parish of Medjugorje, but this community got bigger and bigger and today it has become - in a broad sense - the entire world.

Today's message is asking us to acknowledge this fact, because our interest in the messages cannot be limited to a passive expectation of extraordinary events, or to a quick read of the messages without them becoming prayer of the heart. Mary loves us with motherly love, and with motherly patience she awaits our love and our communion.

Mary's words ought to determine our choices, influence our actions, become incarnate in our lives and not be just wishful thinking. Our beloved Mother awaits our love and our communion. "I pray that you may be a community of God's children, of my children", Mary tells us. This community refers to the new People of God; the People of little ones so loved by Pope Francis; the People he is calling to stay close to Jesus and Mary so that the Church is not only rich in God's Providence, but is a Church that is poor, humble, strong and holy!

Thank you, blessed Mother, for your presence amongst us! Thank you for teaching us that Jesus is the Good News, the Gospel, and that it is there, in the Gospel, that we can find Him without fear of being deceived! N.Q.



Albino Luciani - John Paul I The Smiling Pope

Albino Luciani was born in the mountain region of N.E. Italy just before the beginning of WWI (17 Oct. 1912) into a poor family. A humble and good-hearted person, he was however, resolute when it came to making important decisions. His motto was *Servite Domino in Laetitia* (serve the Lord with joy). He is remembered particularly for his smile and amiability. His pontificate was very brief: just 33 days, from 26th Aug. to 28th Sept. 1978.

Pia Luciani, niece of Pope John Paul I, recounts: [My uncle] was extremely intelligent and articulate. The simplicity of his homilies was not a natural thing for him. He always made the effort to speak with simplicity. He once told me why. He said: "My parish priest once asked me to write an article. I put all my knowledge into it and handed it over to him. He read it and then said: 'Well done, Albino! I see that you study. But can you picture that little old lady that sits up the back, the one that can barely read and write...? Do you think she could understand what you've said here? I'd like you to write it again, with that woman in mind.'" And then my uncle told me that everytime he wrote he did it with that old woman in mind; adapting his discourses and homilies so that they could be understood by the most humble, the simplest of people.

He said to me: "*When I pray I put all those studies aside, because I don't need them when I pray.* I take off my ring and zucchetto, and I place myself before the Lord like a little child saying his prayers with his mother."

He was always loving and kind to everyone. He truly was a very good man; he had a very strong character, and was headstrong with himself, because when there was something he thought was right and had to be done, there was nothing that could stop him from realising it.

Font: Sulla Via di Damasco

Address: Eco di Maria, Via Cremona 28,
I-46100 Mantova, Italy
E-mail: eco-segreteria@ecodimaria.net
Webpage: www.ecodimaria.net



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 our blessed Mother reach out to her children.

PLEASE DONATE TO SUPPORT US:

We accept: Personal cheques,
International Postal Orders,

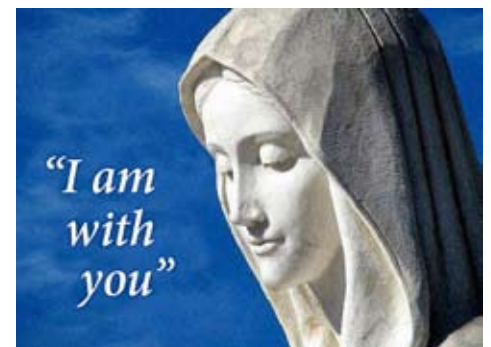
Bank Transfer:

Assoc. Eco di Maria
Bank: Monte dei Paschi di Siena
Agenzia Belfiore - Mantua, Italy

IBAN IT 45 M 01030 11506

000004754021

BIC PASCITM1185



Courage my child! I am here to sustain you!

I had been preparing myself to live the joy of the solemn anniversary of sixth and last apparition at Fatima (13 October 1917). It had been a particularly difficult day, and though I had Mary in my head and heart, I was unable to undo the knots that had been weighing down my heart, making me feel tired and discouraged.

Late afternoon came and finally, there was a ray of light. Pope Francis, in connection with the twelve most famous Marian shrines in the world, gave a videomessage via satellite. Addressing each and every faithful - there also me personally - he said: "*When we are tired, discouraged, crushed by problems, let us turn our gaze to Mary, and feel her gaze speaking these words to our heart: 'Courage my child! I am here to sustain you!'*" And after hearing those words, I felt immediately lifted up.

How many times, in a variety of ways, are we put to the test! Does not our blessed Mother come daily to Medjugorje to sustain us, console us, lift us back up, and put us back on the path? In the darkest and saddest moments let us give ear to her as she speaks to our heart, saying: Courage my child! I am here to sustain you!

With Jesus and Mary I bless you!

J. Remo

Mantua, November 2013

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