

Reflections on the message of May 25, 1996

"Dear Children! Today I wish to thank you for all the prayers and sacrifices that you, during this month which is consecrated to me, have offered to me. Little children, I also wish that you all become active during this time that is through me connected to heaven in a special way. Pray in order to understand that you all, through your life and example, ought to collaborate in the work of salvation. Little children, I wish that all people convert and see me and my son, Jesus, in you. I will intercede for you and help you to become the light. In helping the others, your soul will also find salvation. Thank you for having responded to my call."

May 25, 1996

There are so many pilgrims visiting Medjugorje these days that we may say that it is as alive as it had been in the best months before the war. At the moment we have groups from Romania, Hungary, Poland, six or seven buses from Slovakia and thirty from the Czech Republic, many Austrians, Germans, Swiss, French, English and Irish, Italians, Americans and Canadians, South Americans and South Africans, Australians and New Zealanders. Every day we have 2-3,000 at the evening prayers.

We find ourselves in the month in which we celebrate the 15th Anniversary and a very large number of groups are expected for it. We are preparing ourselves for the Anniversary both spiritually as well as physically. We have much work going on right now behind the church so that the large evening Masses will have a better place. Among the celebrations we have also arranged a concert on June 21 where the very well-known tenor, Jose Carreras, will be singing. He will sing a Mass and the Theme of the entire evening will be: THE MESSAGE OF PEACE OF MEDJUGORJE. President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia will also be coming for that evening. It is also being discussed how much evenings of such a nature contribute to the spirit of prayer and if they are at all necessary. When one adds together everything, we should also be aware that the message of peace is primarily to be

carried by conversion, prayer and fasting, but it may just as well also be transmitted in other ways such as music.

All the visionaries are at home except for Marija who is in Italy but she too will be coming for the Anniversary. Vicka, Ivan and Jacov are very busy with the pilgrims and are giving their testimony every day. Mirjana right now is less occupied with pilgrims because while she was pregnant with her third child, we are sorry to have to report that she lost the baby.

Even though I did not yet wish to speak about it in last month's reflection, Frances Russell of Boston, Massachusetts was healed on April 17 while here in Medjugorje. Twenty-seven years ago she had an accident in the hospital where she was working and then, despite many operations, had remained on crutches while also experiencing dreadful headaches due to her damaged spine. In the last years she had become worse and worse and the latest from the doctors was that they had nothing else to do and that she must simply carry this cross. She told me that having heard about Medjugorje for quite some time that she had developed a great yearning to come here. Despite her family advising against it she came anyway because she, due to her having become weaker and weaker lately, knew that if she did not come now that she would never be able to. She arrived the week after Easter and on April 17 put down her crutches. Her headaches too disappeared and she also became different in her soul. A few days ago, in other words, a month later she called me from Boston and reported that everything continues as it had started here and that she would return again for the Anniversary out of gratitude. Let us also thank God for this and pray that ever more people receive healed souls as well as healed bodies, and now to this month's message.

TODAY I WISH TO THANK YOU...

I have to admit that in the beginning I had difficulty with the last sentence of each message when she ends with: THANK YOU FOR HAVING RESPONDED TO MY CALL. In several earlier messages Mary had already expressed thanks in the message itself as she does here. How can Mary thank us? Have we really followed her last message? Have we really prayed and offered her sacrifices so that she is now thanking us for them? Remember this clearly: Mary is mother and she loves us all. Therefore she also sees the smallest good in our hearts, in our thoughts and in our intentions and it is these for which she thanks us. In this Marian behavior, in

this gratitude of Mary's we can easily discover our own behavior. We must admit that we usually first see the bad in people and it is this that hinders us from thanking and from recognizing the good in them. Yet gratitude is a condition for peace. If the one with whom you are living or the one who is living with you sees the good in you and you in him and both are grateful for one another, then peace is possible. We are all familiar with the experience that we either do not see the good or are very prone to forget it. Both these situations greatly endanger peace among men. A Psychotherapist once said: "Become grateful, and you will be able to protect your soul from aggressions and from depressions. Because if people do not see me, if people do not recognize me or expect too much from me and only then thank me, then I can lose my self value, then I can really become depressed and doubt the value of my life or I will become aggressive in wishing to prove to people that I too am worth something." Gratitude is one of the most wonderful expressions of faith. The one who thanks is, one can say, a faithful person because he sees himself and the others as gifts of God, because he sees all gifts and all of life as a gift for which he wishes to give thanks. Being conscious of the value of one's own life and that of the others helps us to live in peace, and when people do not yet acknowledge us and thereby become grateful, then we can still live in peace because Mary as mother thanks us, recognizes us and we know that we are important to her. Often St. Paul too called upon us to be grateful and in the Gospels Jesus Himself relates several parables in which He speaks and shows us that gratitude has encountered great crises. Of the ten lepers who were healed only one came back to thank for his being healed, and Jesus Himself asked, "Where are the others?" So merely one of ten was grateful. Only 10%! To become grateful we must, of course, first become humble and in the light of humility we will first of all see ourselves in truth and then the truth about the others. There is an old saying: "The one who scolds you will also be accepted by you, because you know that he would prefer to praise you." In our prayers we should also be sure to thank God often. Gratitude is also a "golden rule" in teaching the young. Whoever only sees even the smallest positive things and who then builds upon these helps people to grow in the right way.

FOR ALL THE PRAYERS AND SACRIFICES THAT YOU, DURING THIS MONTH WHICH IS CONSECRATED TO ME, HAVE OFFERED TO ME

Mary thanks us for our prayers and sacrifices and this is the reason that we may never say that our prayers were not good. Instead we must pray as we can pray. If we are tired, we ought to pray like those who are tired. If we are sad, we ought to pray like those who are sad. We must simply meet with God in prayer as we are, and we must become aware that we are helping Mary with our prayers and sacrifices. We know after all from the messages that God has entrusted her with a plan -- a plan in which, she also told us, we are very important. When we become aware of this, then we will certainly also be able to decide more easily to start praying and sacrificing and, at the same time, we will never lose sight of the purpose of life. Even when people see no good whatsoever in us, when they recognize nothing in us, when people do not cherish our deeds, we still know that God, through Mary, does do so. This is also the reason to have peace in our hearts. This message of Mary's was given to us on the eve of the great Feast of Pentecost. Pentecost means that it is possible and when we think of the Apostles, then we know what this means. Before they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they were all in fear. They stayed behind locked doors and prayed only there yet on that same day they were allowed to open the windows and begin their missions. They had been beaten due to their testimonies about the Resurrection of Jesus and they had been forbidden to speak, but their answer was: "How can we remain silent about what we ourselves have experienced?" (Story of the Apostles) Here let me suggest that we occasionally listen to ourselves and very consciously analyze our words. Do we not all too often say that this or that is impossible? Do we ever say: It is impossible to pray, impossible to fast, impossible to change, impossible to convert, impossible to free myself from the burdens, the sins or the bad habits. If we often say that this or that is impossible, what does it then mean in the Creed when we say: "I believe in God, the Almighty...?" Even if it is impossible for me, then it is still possible for God! This is how it was with Mary when she, upon hearing the news from the angel, said the words: "Your will be done." To God everything is possible. Mary invites us all to enter the battle for the good and against the bad, and here she, of course, means within the family, the community and the Parish, and when we all too often say that this or that is impossible then we have probably already created much space for sin and for evil to enter among us. We must also remain aware that Mary does not wish us to become fanatics, yet she does certainly wish us to become more radical in our decisions for the good and our decisions against sin and evil.

This entire activity should, of course, be regarding life, to protect born as well as unborn life and to decide to intercede for the life of every person. This is where Mary wishes to see us active, and radically so.

I ALSO WISH THAT YOU ALL BECOME ACTIVE...

Mary is active, We believe that she is coming now every day for already 14 years and 11 months. Every day she is with us, prays for us, intercedes for us to God, gives us her messages and the courage to continue. She is active!

DURING THIS TIME THAT IS THROUGH ME CONNECTED TO HEAVEN IN A SPECIAL WAY

If it is she today who is connecting Heaven to earth, then we should also respond to her with our activities. To become active is a natural consequence of peace. The peace about which she speaks and to which she wishes to lead us is a condition of the soul in which we have the strength to fight against evil, and then again to decide and to work unceasingly for the good. And for this we certainly need the gift of the Holy Spirit and the inner strength. Therefore we must often in our prayers ask for this strength. When we think of the experiences of St. Paul, we know how he discovered his strengths. He did so precisely during moments of his weakness. "Just when I was weak I experienced the strength of Jesus in me." Sometimes it can happen to us that when we think that we have the strength and are strong by ourselves, just then have we been weak and had become weak. With our activities we can help in Heaven and earth being connected and in doing so we can hope for better times. Mary then becomes specific...

I WISH THAT ALL PEOPLE CONVERT AND SEE ME AND MY SON, JESUS, IN YOU

This wish of Mary's is nothing new for us. We were created after the likeness of God and our assignment is to grow toward perfection, the perfection that God Himself has. Jesus said: "Be perfect as the Father in heaven." We are invited to love as He loves, to be merciful as He is merciful and to forgive as He forgives. When we live like this, then the others will also convert. There is an old Latin proverb that is: "Words can move, but examples attract." I believe that the strength of the Medjugorje phenomenon is that many people have, by the change in their lives and their behavior, been noticed by the others, and that it happens that the others

follow. It is certainly also true that many people today are living in spiritual, mental and physical distress. Many young people are missing the purpose in life, while many also live in fear, in sorrow and in depression and therefore many become aggressive and destroy themselves, destroy the others and destroy their families. People need salvation, need to be healed and need to become holy in order to be saved. As St. Augustine says: "God created us without us, but He cannot save us without us." We ought to become active for ourselves yet also for the others. We are invited to help with the work of salvation, so to only help with our own salvation would already be neither Christian nor according to the Gospel. Mary and Jesus see it when we are humble, when we love and when we offer ourselves for others, and when we live like this we will also become the light.

I WILL INTERCEDE FOR YOU AND HELP YOU TO BECOME THE LIGHT

Jesus in the Gospels often spoke of the Christians as being the light of the world, because He Himself is The Light. Here Mary gave another intention...

PRAY IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ALL, THROUGH YOUR LIFE AND EXAMPLE, OUGHT TO COLLABORATE IN THE WORK OF SALVATION

When we begin to live this message we will no longer have the time to judge the others because we are weak or nasty, but rather every human weakness and every human suffering will again become a new reason and motivation to help with their salvation. No-one loves to live in darkness. No-one wishes to live with hate and negative feelings. People always wait for or seek others who will help them come out from the dark and into light, out of hate and into love, out of hopelessness and into hope, out of destruction and into a new and healed world, out of death and into life and finally out of time and into eternity. We are very important in this work because Mary has already said that she can do nothing without us, and in this way...

IN HELPING THE OTHERS, YOUR SOUL WILL ALSO FIND SALVATION

We must exclude every egoism and every selfishness and in helping the others then we will also find salvation. May it become this way and may it be that we really

become complete, active and mature Christians during this 15th Anniversary. Then peace will also certainly come to all people. If every one of us simply lights a small light of love and of hope, then the whole world will become more light and that, after all, is the purpose of everything! Now I would again like to invite you to prayer.

God, our Father, we thank You that You are sending us Mary and that we are important to her. We also thank You that our prayers are important to You. Father, we thank you that You need us and expect us to help with the work of salvation. We ask You to send us the Holy Spirit and all His gifts so that we may become active in the fight against and conquer all evil in and around us, so that we discover it in time and that we, with Your strength, can stop it. Give us the grace and the strength so that we can serve the others. Give us the grace of conversion and cleans us of everything that blocks us from collaborating in the work of salvation. Oh Father, make all of us Mary's little children so that the others may see her and Jesus in us. Help us all to become the light of the world and thank You for letting Mary lead us to our salvation and that of the others. Give us the grace that we can prepare ourselves well for the 15th Anniversary and that we may all reach Eternity, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen

Fr. Slavko, Medjugorje

May 28, 1996

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