

A post-Medjugorje reflection



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INDEPENDENT

From 20 till 27 July I was blessed with a unique visit to Medjugorje. I have purposely termed my visit “unique” because every pilgrimage to Medjugorje is a transformative experience bathed in God’s unfathomable grace.

Medjugorje suggests how much love our heavenly mother cares for us, her beloved children. She comes to visit us from heaven in order to strengthen us by her maternal presence to keep holding fast to her son’s teachings and spirit. Thus, Mary’s distinguished presence in Medjugorje necessarily makes of this place the spiritual hub of all those who recognize her as Coredemptrix, Mediatrix of All Graces, and Advocate.

Today’s world, shattered as it is by all kinds of conflict, looks fervently to Mary’s greatest possible intercession for the serious crises of faith, family, society and peace that deeply mark our human condition. Medjugorje is one of those unparalleled places where Mary’s spiritually universal motherhood still proves to be a wonderful remedy to these global crises which menace the majority of humanity.

As it stands, the more we willingly realize and take to heart Mary’s intercessory power the more she is capable of using this power for the peoples of the world that the dying Jesus freely entrusted to her care at Calvary.

While peacefully sitting right before the spot where the six visionaries claim that Mary, the Mother of God, first appeared to them on Apparition Hill in Medjugorje, I could not miss that small shrine that has a white statue of Mary with the Croatian phrase *Ja sam Krajlica Mira*, “I am the

Queen of Peace”. That powerful Marian title brought tears to my eyes. It vividly recalled to mind the undying words of Saint John Paul II with which he commended the peace of our world to the Blessed Virgin Mary on the solemnity of her Immaculate Conception on 8 December 2003.

“Obtain for the men and women of the third millennium the precious gift of peace: peace in hearts and in families, in communities and among peoples; peace especially for those nations where combating and dying continue every day... In these times marked by not a few uncertainties and fears over the present and future fate of our planet ... listen to the cry of pain of the victims of war and of so many forms of violence that bloody the earth. Dispel the darkness of sadness and solitude, of hatred and vengeance. Open the minds and hearts of all to trust and forgiveness. Help every human being, and all races and cultures, to encounter and accept Jesus, who came on earth in the mystery of Christmas to give us his peace. Mary, Queen of Peace, give us Christ, true peace of the world.”

On that special evening in Rome’s Piazza di Spagna, the Pope affirmed that “Mary is our unbreakable support in the hard struggle against sin and its consequences”. Thus, a hallmark of Medjugorje’s spiritual heritage is its continual invitation to receive fruitfully the sacrament of confession. As a matter of fact, Jakov, one of the six visionaries, often says that the sacrament of confession is vital in order for one to live Our Lady’s messages. When he addresses various pilgrims who come to Medjugorje, Jakov tells them repeatedly: “Purify your hearts because only with pure and clean hearts will we be able to accept and to live what Our Lady has been inviting us to here.”

Jakov’s appeal perfectly agrees with Pope Francis’ reflection on the sacrament of penance when he said: “In Confession we ask for forgiveness from Jesus. Forgiveness is ... a present, a gift of the Holy Spirit, who fills us with the purification of mercy and grace which flows incessantly from the wide open heart of Christ crucified and risen. ... It reminds us that only if we allow ourselves to be reconciled in the Lord Jesus with the Father and with our brothers can we really be in peace... When we receive the forgiveness of Jesus we are in peace, with that peace of the soul that is so beautiful that only Jesus can give, only Him.”

In communion with Pope Francis, Medjugorje simply invites you: “Be courageous and go to Confession!”

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Source: <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2014-08-10/letters/a-post-medjugorje-reflection-6150225923/>

Resources : http://www.quies.org/quies_confession.php