

History of Medjugorje Apparitions

The Most Important Event Happening in the World Today

Medjugorje, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, has become a spiritual haven with more than fifty million pilgrims having travelled there since its beginning. The messages are important and urgent as the Virgin Mary reveals that these will be her last apparitions on earth, because she states, "It will no longer be necessary." In the history of the Catholic Church, the Blessed Virgin Mary has appeared in apparition many times; the most recognizable names being Guadalupe (Mexico), La Sallette and Lourdes (France), Knock (Ireland) and Fatima (Portugal): but never in recorded Marian history has she appeared daily for so long a period of time, to so many chosen visionaries, with such profound global results.

The History of Medjugorje

Since 1981, in a small village named Medjugorje in the country of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Blessed Virgin Mary, human mother of Jesus Christ, has been appearing in supernatural apparition and giving messages to the world. She tells us that God has sent her to us as an act of grace. In Her own words She tells us, "I have come to tell the world that God exists. He is the fullness of life, and to enjoy this fullness and peace, you must return to God."

On 24th June 1981 at approximately six o'clock in the evening, on a hill known as Podbrdo, six children (Ivanka Ivankovic, Mirjana Dragicevic, Vicka Ivankovic, Ivan Dragicevic, Ivan Ivankovic and Milka Pavlovic) saw an incredibly beautiful young woman with a little child in her arms. She didn't say anything to them but indicated with gestures that they should come closer. Surprised and frightened they were afraid to come near, even though they immediately thought her to be Our Lady.

The next day, 25th June, the children agreed to meet once again at the same place that Our Lady had previously appeared, in the hope of seeing her again. All of a sudden there was a flash of light. The children looked up and saw Our Lady, this time without the child. She was smiling and joyful and was indescribably beautiful. With her hands she gestured to them to come closer. The children braced themselves and went up to her. They immediately fell to their knees and began to pray the "Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be". Our Lady prayed together with them except for when they prayed the "Hail Mary". After the prayer she began to speak with the children. Ivanka, first of all, asked her about her mother who had died two months previously. And Mirjana asked Our Lady for some sign to be given to show to the people that they were neither lying nor crazy, as some people had claimed. Our Lady finally left the children with the words, "God be with you my angels!" Before that, when the children asked her if they would see her the following day, she replied by nodding her head.

According to the visionaries the whole encounter was indescribable. On that day two of the children which made up the previous day's group were missing; Ivan Ivankovic and Milka Pavlovic. They were replaced by two others; Maria Pavlovic and

Jakov Colo. And from that day onwards according to these six children, Our Lady regularly appears to them. Milka Pavlovic and Ivan Ivankovic, who were present on the first day of apparitions, did not see Our Lady again, even though they returned to the apparition site, in the hope of seeing her.

On 26th June, the children full of anticipation waited at around six o'clock, which was when she previously appeared. They were going towards the same place, to meet her there. They were very happy, although their joy was mixed with fear wondering what the outcome of all this would be. Despite all this, the children could feel some sort of inner strength attracting them to meet with Our Lady. Suddenly, while the children were still on their way, a light flashed three times. To them and to those following them, it was a sign indicating Our Lady's whereabouts. On that third day Our Lady appeared even higher up than on the previous days. All at once Our Lady disappeared. But when the children began to pray, she reappeared. She was cheerful and smiling serenely and once again her beauty was overwhelming.

As they left their houses some older women advised them to carry holy water with them to make sure that it was not of Satan. When they were with Our Lady, Vicka took the water and splashed it in the direction of the vision saying, "If you are Our Blessed Mother, please stay, and if you are not, go away from us". Our Lady smiled at this and remained with the children. Then Mirjana asked her name and she replied, "I am the Blessed Virgin Mary".

On the same day, coming down Podbrdo, Our Lady appeared one more time, this time, however only to Maria saying, "Peace, peace, peace and only peace." Behind her, Maria could see a cross. After which Our Lady repeated, in tears, the following words, "Peace must reign between man and God, and between all people!" The area where this took place is about halfway up to the Apparition Site.

On the 27th of June, Our Lady appeared three times to the children. On that occasion the children asked all kinds of questions and Our Lady responded. For priests, she gave this message. "May the priests firmly believe and may they take care of the faith of the people!" Once again, Jakov and Mirjana asked for a sign, because the people had begun to accuse them of lying and of taking drugs. "Do not be afraid of anything", Our Lady replied. Before parting, when asked if she would come again, she indicated that she would. On the way down Podbrdo, Our Lady appeared one more time to say goodbye with the words, "May God be with you my angels, go in peace!".

On the 28th of June, big crowds were gathering from all parts, even from the early hours of the morning. By noon there were about fifteen thousand people. On the same day, the Parish Priest, Fr. Jozo Zovko, examined the children on what they had seen and heard in the previous days.

At the usual time Our Lady appeared again. The children prayed with her, and afterwards they questioned her. Vicka, for example, asked "My dear Lady, what do you want from us and what do you want from our priests?". Our Lady replied, "The people should pray and firmly believe." Regarding priests, she replied that they

should believe firmly and help others to do the same. On that day Our Lady came and went many times. During one of these times the children asked her why she doesn't appear in the Parish Church for everyone to see. She replied, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe". Even though the crowds were pushing them with their questions and curiosities and the day was heavy and sultry, the children felt as though they were in heaven.

On the 29th of June, the children were taken to Mostar for a medical examination after which they were proclaimed "healthy". The statement of the head doctor was "The children aren't crazy, the person who brought them here must be though..." The crowds on Apparition Hill that day were greater than ever. As soon as the children arrived at the usual place and began to pray, Our Lady appeared. On that occasion the Blessed Mother exhorted them to have faith saying, "The people should believe firmly and have no fear." On that day, a doctor who was following and observing them, during the apparition desired to touch Our Lady. The children guided her hand to the place where Our Lady's shoulder was, and she felt a tingling sensation. The doctor, even though an atheist had to admit that, "Here, something strange is happening!".

On that same day, a child by the name of Daniel Setka, was miraculously healed. Her parents had brought her to Medjugorje, praying specifically for a healing. Our Lady had promised that this would come about if the parents prayed and fasted and strongly believed. The child thereupon was healed.

On the 30th of June two young girls suggested to the children to go by car further away to be able to stroll in peace. Really their intention was to bring them away from the area and keep them until after the normal apparition time had passed. The local communist authorities were greatly threatened by this phenomenon and were anxious to put a stop to the large gathering of crowds. However, even though the children were far away at the usual time of the apparition, it was as if an interior call prompted them to ask to be let out of the car. As soon as they did, and said a prayer, Our Lady drew near to them, from the direction of Podbrdo which was now over a kilometre away. She prayed seven "Our Fathers" etc. and so the girl's trick had no effect.

Soon after this the police began to hinder the children and the pilgrims going on Podbrdo; the site of the apparitions. The children, and soon afterwards even the crowds, were forbidden to go there. But Our Lady continued to appear to them in secret places, in their homes and in the fields. The children had already gained confidence, and openly spoke with Our Lady, eagerly seeking her advice, listening to her warnings and messages. The events of Medjugorje continued in this fashion up until the 15th of January 1982.

In the meantime, Father Jozo Zovko O.F.M., the Parish Priest, began to host the pilgrims in the Church, enabling them to participate in the rosary and to celebrate the Eucharist. Our Lady sometimes appeared to them in the church at that time. Even the Parish Priest himself, once while praying the rosary, saw Our Lady. Immediately he broke off praying and spontaneously started to sing a popular hymn;

“Lijepa is, lijepa Djevo Mario”; – “O how beautiful you are Most Blessed Virgin Mary”. The whole church could see that something unusual was happening to him. Afterwards he stated that he had seen her. And so, he, who up until then had not only been doubtful, but openly against even rumours of the apparitions, became their defender. He testified his support of the apparitions even to the point of serving a prison sentence.

From the 15th of January 1982 onwards, the children saw Our Lady in a closed off area of the Parish Church. The Parish Priest arranged this because of the newly arisen difficulties, and sometimes even dangers, which presented themselves to the visionaries. Previously the children had ensured that this was in accord with Our Lady's wishes. Because of the prohibitions of the Diocesan Bishop however, from April 1985 onwards the children ceased to use the area of the church as an apparition site. Instead, they went to a room in the Parish house.

All this time, from the beginning of the apparitions up until today, there have only been five days when none of the children saw Our Lady.

Our Lady didn't always appear in the same place either, nor to the same group, nor individuals, nor did her apparitions always last a specified period. Sometimes the apparitions lasted two minutes, sometimes an hour. Neither did Our Lady appear at the children's will. Sometimes they prayed and waited but Our Lady didn't appear until a little while afterwards, unexpectedly and unforwarned. And sometimes she appeared to one and not to the others. If she hadn't promised an appointed time, nobody knew when she would appear, or if she would appear. Neither did she appear always to just the aforesaid visionaries, but to others also of different age, stature, race, education and walks of life. All this suggests that the apparitions are not a product of the imagination. It depends neither on time nor place, nor desire nor the prayer of pilgrim or visionary, but moreover on the will of He who permits it.

The Blessed Virgin's mission is one of peace and love. She has come to earth to re-educate us and to help us convert and centre our lives back to God. She continues to give messages to three of the original six visionaries. Once the Mother of Jesus stops appearing in Medjugorje, there will be three warnings given to the world as earth-shaking events. For that reason, the Blessed Virgin invites us to urgent conversion and reconciliation before the warnings, for once they occur, it will be too late for many.

Since the apparitions began in 1981, approximately 50 million people of all faiths, from all over the world, have visited Medjugorje and have left spiritually strengthened and renewed. Many bring back stories of miracles in the form of healings (of mind, body and spirit), supernatural visual signs, and deep conversions back to God.

Today, the apparitions continue. The Blessed Virgin Mary tells us the blunt truth about the state of the world. Here are some examples of her messages given to the world through the visionaries at Medjugorje:

"You are ready to commit sin, and to put yourselves in the hands of Satan without reflecting." (May 25, 1987)

"Children, darkness reigns over the whole world. People are attracted by many things and they forget about the more important."

"Light won't reign in the world until people accept Jesus, until they live His words, which is the Word of the Gospel."

"Dear children, this is the reason for my presence among you for such a long time: to lead you on the path of Jesus. I want to save you and, through you, to save the whole world. Many people now live without faith; some don't even want to hear about Jesus, but they still want peace and satisfaction! Children, here is the reason why I need your prayer: prayer is the only way to save the human race." (July 30, 1987)

There are many such messages given to us over these past almost four decades.

Some useful website links:-

Official Medjugorje Pilgrimage Shrine Website

<http://www.medjugorje.hr/en/>

Sr. Emmanuel Maillard – Children of Medjugorje

<https://sremmanuel.org/>

A short history of the apparitions in Medjugorje

<https://www.medjugorje.ws/en/messages/docs-short-history/>