

# MEDJUGORJE NEWS

New Zealand

FREE

Issue no\* - 88 June 2018



Review of  
the 2018  
Auckland  
Eucharistic  
Convention

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peace

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As its name implies, the aim of this newsletter is essentially **the spreading of the messages received by the visionaries** in Medjugorje, according to the wishes of Our Lady

### **The Medjugorje Story**

On the evening of 24 June 1981, in the parish of St James in Medjugorje, six young people claimed to have seen the Blessed Virgin Mary on Podbrdo Hill. The next day four of the six alleged another meeting with Our Lady, and said they spoke with her. On this occasion, the four teenagers (three girls and a boy) were joined by another young boy and a teenage girl. These six became the definitive visionaries in Medjugorje; they are Ivanka Ivankovic, Mirjana Dragicevic, Vicka Ivankovic, Ivan Dragicevic, Marija Pavlovic and Jakov Colo.

Since 1981, these six young people have been the centre of world attention, and medical and scientific studies. Their principal claim is that practically every day to the present time, our Blessed Lady has been appearing to one or more of them, and that from her they have received thousands of messages for the parish of Medjugorje and the world. All six still claim apparitions, though only three of them now on a daily basis, and each of the six says that he or she has received, or is in the process of receiving, ten secrets. The first of the secrets is to be revealed to the world through Mirjana Dragicevic, and the third is said to be concerned with a permanent sign that will authenticate the apparitions and be a help to conversion, and will be evident to all at Medjugorje. The visionaries say that Our Lady identifies herself to them as the Queen of Peace.

As a result of these claims, more than forty million people have visited Medjugorje from all over the world and there have been many assertions regarding remarkable signs and wonders, cures and spiritual healing. There is no doubt at all that those millions of people have found a pilgrimage to Medjugorje one of the most spiritually significant experiences of their lives.

**News from Medjugorje can be found at the official website:**

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

We acknowledge and accept that the authority regarding the authenticity of apparitions, locutions and related messages as well as all private revelations from **Our Lord, Our Lady or any Saint rests with the Holy See of Rome whose final judgement we will respect and obey.**

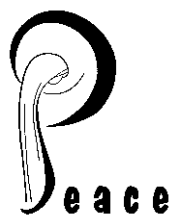
**We also affirm our total allegiance to our One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, our Priests and Bishops and our Holy Father, Pope Francis .**

## THE MEDJUGORJE MESSAGE

The Blessed Virgin Mary proposes a six-point programme:

1. **Faith** - Belief in God and in the supernatural. It is your true vision. Therefore live by it.
2. **Commitment to God** - Let Him direct your life. Begin by turning away from sin in true conversion and repentance.
3. **Prayer** - Regular Mass, monthly confession, daily rosary and dedication to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
4. **Fasting** - Bread and water on Fridays (and Wednesdays) if you can. If not, at least cut back or practise some other form of self denial.
5. **Peace** - In your own heart, in your family and neighbourhood and workplace, in all your human relations and reaching out to the war-stricken world.
6. **The Holy Bible** - We should read part of the Holy Scripture every day.

**The Messages of Mary are addressed not only to Catholics but to the whole human race, regardless of beliefs or religion.**



# Our Lady's Messages



25 January, 2018

"Dear children!

May this time be for you a time of prayer, so that the Holy Spirit, through prayer, may descend upon you and give you conversion. Open your hearts and read the Sacred Scripture, that through the testimonies you also may be closer to God. Above everything, little children, seek God and the things of God and leave earthly ones to the earth, because Satan is attracting you to the dust and sin. You are called to holiness and created for Heaven; therefore, seek Heaven and the things of Heaven.

Thank you for having responded to my call."

25 February, 2018

"Dear children!

In this time of grace I am calling all of you to open yourselves and to live the commandments which God has given you, that they may lead you through the Sacraments on the way of conversion. The world and worldly temptations are testing you, but you, little children, look at God's creatures which He has given to you in beauty and humility and, little children, love God above everything and He will lead you on the way of salvation.

Thank you for having responded to my call."

25 March, 2018

"Dear children!

I am calling you to be with me in prayer in this time of grace when darkness is fighting against the light. Pray, little children, confess and begin a new life in grace. Decide for God and He will lead you towards holiness; and the cross will be a sign of victory and hope for you. Be proud that you are baptized and grateful in your heart that you are a part of God's plan.

Thank you for having responded to my call."

25 April, 2018

"Dear children!

Today I am calling you to live your new life with Jesus. May the Risen One give you strength to always be strong in the trials of life and to be faithful and persevering in prayer; because Jesus saved you by His wounds and by His Resurrection gave you new life. Pray, little children, and do not lose hope. May joy and peace be in your hearts and witness the joy that you are mine. I am with you and love you all with my motherly love.

Thank you for having responded to my call."





### *From the Editors:*

**Dear Friends of Medjugorje News,**

Greetings and Our Lady's love and peace to you all.

I write this after spending a weekend of love, peace and mercy with the Risen One, our Lord Jesus Christ, His amazing Mother, and many friends in Christ at the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Eucharist Convention.

God is so great and good that He brings this time of refreshment and food for our souls for all His people. Our speakers are filled with his spirit and his love and their words sure make my heart burn within me. There is something for everyone at this convention and I know none of us goes home empty or the person we came. Jesus blesses us and makes us new and stronger to living in Him through our difficulties and joys. It is with this knowledge of God's love and mercy for His people that I would like to encourage all our readers if it is at all possible to come to the next Eucharist Convention which is held at the same time every year. (The first weekend after Easter.) You won't regret it!

I am so grateful to all those who say "yes" to him in helping to make this a much graced and blessed event. Thank you so very much. My thanks and praise to God will continue for you all.

God has shown me just how important and indispensable prayer is, he has also blessed me with being able to attend daily Mass which I am very grateful for. Sometimes I feel there is so much to be prayed for, that it is an impossible task but then I am reminded "give it all to me" and yes I am able to place it all on the altar and offer it in thanks and praise to our Great and Wonderful God. What a blessing and love that the Father has lavished on us.

Anyone in need of prayer I am only too willing to help and you can e-mail me at [bernadette.medjugorjenews@gmail.com](mailto:bernadette.medjugorjenews@gmail.com)

We can now be found on facebook thanks to Bob and Judith Gill, our webmaster.  
: <https://www.facebook.com/medjugorjenewsNZ>.

**May the Lords face shine on you and give you peace, and may the Lord bless you and keep you.**

*Bernadette Isaacs*

### **Visiting those in prison – by writing**

Would you like to become involved in a very special work of mercy by writing to long-term prisoners in a foreign country?

Divine Mercy Publications have set up a team of letter writers to correspond with the inmates of a maximum security jail in Zambia, central Africa. Most of these are Catholics/Christians to whom we send reading and prayer literature as well as clothes and toiletries.

The requests for pen pals are growing; the prison we write to has over 400 inmates, most of whom are in desperate need of consolation and encouragement. They are served by an Irish Catholic priest, whom they see 2-3 times per month.

We wish to continue this important work of mercy and need helpers to 'adopt' a prisoner and write on a regular basis, usually once every 1-2 months. Can you help?

There will be absolutely no cost to you, Divine Mercy Publications/Trust will cover all expenses including sending funds via the prison Chaplain approximately twice per year to help the inmates purchase food, toiletries, medicines, clothes and in some case pay a portion of their children's school fees to prevent them becoming 'street kids'.

All you need give is your time and mercy to these needy souls.

If you would like to know more please contact us. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Divine Mercy Publications Trust Christchurch. PO Box 20266, Bishopdale, Christchurch 8543 –

Ph/Fax 03 3592087

Excerpts from

## *Children of Medjugorje*

From Sister Emmanuel - <http://www.childrenofmedjugorje.com/>

**On February 2, 2018 Mirjana** received her monthly apparition in her home, in the presence of a small crowd. After the apparition, she shared the following message, which Our Lady gives to all of us:

**"Dear children,** you whom my Son loves, you whom I love with an immeasurable motherly love, do not permit for selfishness, for self love, to rule the world. Do not permit for love and goodness to be hidden. You who are loved, who have come to know the love of my Son, remember that to be loved means to love. My children, have faith. When you have faith you are happy and are spreading peace; your soul trembles with joy. My Son is in such a soul. When you are giving yourself for the faith, when you are giving yourself for love, when you are doing good to your neighbour, my Son smiles in your soul. Apostles of my love, I am turning to you as a mother. I am gathering you around myself and I desire to lead you on the way of love and faith, on the way which leads to the light of the world. I am here for the sake of love, for the sake of faith, because with my motherly blessing I desire to give you hope and strength on your way - because the way which leads to my Son is not easy. It is full of renunciation, giving, sacrifice, forgiveness and much, much love. But this way leads to peace and happiness. My children, do not believe lying voices which speak to you about false things, false glitter. You, my children, return to the Scripture. I am looking at you with immeasurable love, and through God's grace am making myself evident to you. My children, set out with me. May your soul tremble with joy! Thank you."

### **An exorcist priest in Italy.**

Known in his parish for his powerful prayer, this Priest told me that one day a young man who was in big trouble came to see him, and begged to talk to him because he was desperate. He was at the end of his rope. Not only was he physically ill, but he was also in constant mental turmoil. He had become addicted to occult practices that were devastating to his soul, but those practices were only cherry on the cake. He was also into drugs, alcohol and other harmful, addictive things! Unfortunately, this priest was in the middle of another difficult case, and couldn't interrupt that process. But seeing the young man in so much pain, he didn't want him to leave with too much disappointment. He then thought of the beautiful statue of the Mother of God that he had placed in his church. This was the statue of the Blessed Mother at the rue du Bac in Paris, the sanctuary of the Miraculous Medal. In this statue, her hands are extended outwards, with rays of light shining forth from the rings on her fingers representing the graces that she gives when they are asked for by her children. In order to make sure that this lost sheep would not be left alone in his horrible darkness, the priest invited him to have great confidence in the Blessed Virgin, saying: "Go pray before the statue and look at her right in the eye! She is your Mother, she will help you!"

Disappointed at not being able to open his heart to the priest, the young man went to kneel before the Mother of God and poured out all his misery. He focused his gaze on her eyes. Suddenly, he felt a great sense of relief coming from Mary's eyes. Never in his life had he felt such maternal tenderness. Full of joy, he remained for a long time in front of the statue, transfixed. It was like a balm that penetrated his body, his heart and his soul! When he left he was healed and free! Blessed Mary, chosen by God to crush the head of the serpent, was the perfect person to rescue this lost son, trapped by the false happiness that the world offers our young people today. In her maternal compassion, Mary had obtained this release from God.

Dear friends, it is no coincidence that once again this month Our Lady tells us: "**I look at you with immense love and, by the grace of God, I show myself to you.** My children, set out with me. May your soul leap with joy!" Let her Motherly gaze penetrate in the innermost depths of our being!

### **Vigilance for Lent.**

Saint John Bosco had gathered many children who were abandoned on the streets of Turin (Italy). His mother, Margarita, had the difficult task of being a mother to this new found, very large family. One day she just couldn't do it anymore, and she said to her son: "I'm exhausted. They break everything. You can't keep them still. I quit. Find someone else to take care of them!"

Don Bosco remained silent. He knew how much she was doing for them, working practically around the clock. So he pulled a crucifix from his pocket and held it before his mother's eyes. She took a long look at Jesus on the cross, understood the message and ended up saying: "Alright, I'll stay!"

Jesus didn't try to avoid what was coming when it became too difficult. Vicka loves to ask Jesus in prayer: "Lord, tell me, what can I do for you, to comfort you on your way of the cross?" I think that this is the right question we should ask at the beginning of Lent.

Concerning the fast, some people are still reluctant to commit to this practice which the Queen of Peace actually requested from us. Fasting is a grace that we can ask for with fervor because it bears amazing fruit! Let's not forget this message, especially these days with what we are seeing in the news: "Dear children, only by fasting and prayer can you prevent wars, stop wars and suspend natural laws." (Flood, tsunami, avalanches, fire, etc.) So let



us ask ourselves: what could be easier? Fasting on bread and water on Wednesdays and Fridays, or repairing the damage of an earthquake or of a flood that could have been prevented through fasting? Evening prayer before a fasting day:

"Dear Jesus, you know that tomorrow is a day of fasting. You also know that I decided to fast, as your Mother urgently invites us to do. However Jesus, to tell you the truth, I really need You, because I am so attached to food! Fasting is an effort that is difficult for me. O Jesus, I beg you, please stay with me all day. Do not allow temptation to come and steal away the grace that You have prepared for me for tomorrow. I would like to help you reach all those hearts that are now closed to Your call! I know that by offering my fast, You will be able to fill them with Your Light and Your Love. But you know how weak I am... Dear Jesus, give me the grace of fasting with my heart, so as to obtain rich fruits of conversion for my family and so many others, without thinking about food that I will not eat. ...

I don't want to make this decision by myself, but with You. Be my strength, my God! With You, anything is possible and I am not afraid! And also, Jesus, my joy is to think about the millions of Your children who will be spiritually united with me tomorrow, also fasting on bread and water. I will not be alone and that is very encouraging. Your Mother calls us "the apostles of her love." She depends on us to carry out her plans for the world... What an honor to be part of this family!

Dear Jesus, talking to you has already given me courage. Thank you! I surrender myself to You in confidence. I unite my fast to Your fasting in the desert, so that it will acquire infinite value, and this fills me with joy!"

**On March 2, 2018 Mirjana** received her monthly apparition in her home, in the presence of a small crowd. After the apparition, she shared the following message, which Our Lady gives to all of us:

"Dear children, great are the works that the Heavenly Father has done in me, as He does in all those who love Him tenderly and who faithfully and devoutly serve Him. My children, the Heavenly Father loves you, and it is through His love that I am here with you. He is speaking to you. Why do you not desire to see the signs? Everything is easier alongside Him. Also pain lived with Him is easier because faith exists. Faith helps in the pain, and pain without faith leads to despair. Pain lived and offered to God raises up. Did my Son not redeem the world through His painful sacrifice? As His mother I was with Him in the pain and suffering, as I am with all of you. My children, I am with you in life, in suffering, in pain, in joy and in love. Therefore, have hope. It is hope that makes you comprehend that life is there.

My children, I am speaking to you, my voice is speaking to your soul, my heart is speaking to your heart. Oh, apostles of my love, how much my motherly heart love you. How many things I desire to teach you. How my motherly heart desires that you be complete, and you can be complete only when your soul, body and love are united within you. I implore you as my children, pray much for the Church and her servants - your shepherds; that the Church may be such as my Son desires - clear as spring water and full of love. Thank you."

### **St. Joseph in Sicily?**

On March 19th, we celebrated the Solemnity of the great St Joseph. Many offered him a Novena or even a Thirty Day Prayer, entrusting him with their most urgent intentions. One of my dear sisters tells this story that illustrates the kindness of this saint, his humor and his effectiveness.

"I was in a house belonging to the community of the Beatitudes, in Pettineo, Sicily. This house was an old Franciscan convent, very cold and very humid. At that time, there were about 30 of us in the House and we lived in great and very severe poverty. There were neither small nor larger sources of income. We often had many guests who came to pray with us and who stayed for a meal.

I remember that one day, we had nothing to eat. Many of us were young and it was not easy for everyone to eat their fill. Our superiors always told us that Saint Joseph is the father of Providence, and they would tell us a lot of stories about people who had received his help. So we, the younger crowd, still full of zeal, said, "Let's make a shopping list with everything we need, and also add some things we'd like to have", and that's what we did. So in that list, there all sorts of things and there was something for everyone... even Nutella and so many other things that were not really useful. Trusting St Joseph blindly, we put that list behind his image, in the prayer corner in the kitchen.

Every day, we prayed to St. Joseph. We were completely taken by surprise when someone suddenly knocked at the door and left lots of bags! We couldn't believe our eyes! We put all the bags on the big kitchen table. We dared not open them... and then someone exclaimed: "Take the shopping list!" It felt like a treasure hunt: one sister read the products on the list and the others looked inside the bags to see if they were in there. We were amazed, it was like a game of tombola! Nothing was missing! Well ... almost nothing!

I remember Piero's face, he just fell silent in sadness when the sister finished reading the list. Only one thing was missing, peppers! "No, that's not possible! Saint Joseph, should have remembered my peppers! No, that isn't fair!" While he expressed his criticism because there were no peppers, suddenly a familiar voice was heard on the stairs: it was Madame Inès, God rest her soul...

Ines was an elderly lady, a widow who lived alone in Pettineo and who often came to see us. Inés raised her voice on the staircase, she was annoyed by something. In the meantime, Piero was grumbling against St. Joseph in the kitchen, while Ines was expressing her irritation.

- 'What's wrong, Ines? Why are you angry?'

- 'Well nothing! I brought you some peppers in oil, and the jar opened in my bag! Poor thing! She did not immediately understand why her purse stained with oil turned our home into a party!

No, St. Joseph had forgotten absolutely nothing! He just had his own plan: he wanted someone else to become an instrument of God's Providence, and that was Ines. He wanted us to no longer be doubters, he wanted us to be believers!"

St. Joseph did not have an easy time in his life! The torment of seeing Mary with child, the rejection of the people of Bethlehem, the extreme poverty of the stable where Jesus was born, the flight to Egypt by night and the long stay as a political refugee there, without any regular work nor any income, losing Jesus at the age of 12 with those three days of terrible anguish... In short, this man was weathered by ordeals and humiliations, how could he not understand our troubles of today? As Mary said on March 2nd, "Near Him (Jesus), everything is easier. Suffering next to Him is easier because there is faith. Faith helps when you are in pain, and suffering without faith leads to despair. Suffering that is experienced and offered to God raises us up."

### **Two Cardinals on a mission!**

My assistant and I just came back from 4 days in Riga (Latvia), a beautiful mission among very heart-warming people. On our way there, we met Cardinal Schönborn who was on the same flight. He blessed our mission, then said a few words to me about his talk with Pope Francis regarding Medjugorje. Actually, the Pope didn't say anything special. However, the Cardinal's personal opinion is the following: in the absence of an official position from Rome, he thinks that "the results of the Ruini Commission, which were touted by the Pope on May 13th, could be picked up as being the position of the Church." This sounds very positive to me. Still, let us pray more in confidence!

Just before leaving Riga, our small team was received by Cardinal Janis Pujats, retired, who suffered a great deal from the KGB during the Communist persecution, like all his faithful, before the collapse of the Soviet Union. But he managed to stay the course and avoid the labour camps thanks to him listening to the Holy Spirit. He had managed to create a secret printing press and to print thousands of prayer books. He doesn't live like a prince; he lives like a pauper, which moved us a great deal. He has to walk up 3 floors with no elevator to get home, and he walked down those stairs to welcome us. He blessed the fruits of our mission. We felt the hand of God upon us, the blessing of a cardinal before the mission and that of another cardinal at the end!

Thank you, your prayers served us in good stead! Please don't stop praying!

### **"Paul, Apostle of Christ"**

The film with Jim Caviezel, "Paul, Apostle of Christ", will be released on 28 March in movie theatres. Jim Caviezel, actor of "The Passion of the Christ", is announcing Mel Gibson's film. His message is quite Medjugorjan (from 9.56 to 10.42) with Mary's 5 points. He also talks about Saint Maximilian Kolbe who said "Indifference is the greatest sin of the 21st century." He agrees with this. When the stars of this world become Christian, how powerful is that!

### **Dear Irish people!**

Despite the Referendum on May 25th to repeal the 8th amendment, you may like to know that some great acts of prayer are going on around Ireland, so there is still hope! Before the vote, there will be 40 days of adoration in the little chapel at the top of the mountain called Croagh Patrick, where St. Patrick spent 40 days in prayer. Both the clergy and volunteers are getting involved. Many other prayer events have been set up around the country, so the troops are gathering thick and fast. God's will be done! St. Patrick drove the serpents out of Ireland, he should now obtain this grace for us again and send fire down to Ireland! But he needs our prayers and fasting against those poisonous serpents! Please, I beg you, go and vote for Life, your vote will make a difference! Here in Medjugorje, we are with you! Let us all keep the Ireland in our prayers.

**On April 2, 2018 (St. John Paul II's birth into heaven), Mirjana received her monthly apparition at the Blue Cross**, on a beautiful spring day in the sunshine. After the apparition, she delivered the message Mary gave for all of us:

"**Dear children**, through the great love of the Heavenly Father I am beside you as your mother and you are beside me as my children, as apostles of my love whom I ceaselessly gather around me. My children, you are those who, along with prayer, need to completely surrender to my Son so that you may no longer live but my Son may live in you - so that all those who do not know my Son may see Him in you and come to desire to know Him. Pray that in you they may see resolute humility and goodness, a readiness to serve others; that in you they may see that you live your vocation in the world with the heart, in communion with my Son; that in you they may see meekness, tenderness and love for my Son as well as for all brothers and sisters. Apostles of my love, you must pray much and cleanse your hearts so that you may be the first to walk on the way of my Son, that you may be the just who are united with the justice of my Son. My children, as my apostles, you must be united in the communion which emanates from my Son, so that my children who do not know my Son may recognize the communion of love and may come to desire to walk on the way of life, the way of unity with my Son. Thank you."

### **Vicka in Loreto.**

Some time ago, Vicka went with a dozen friends to the Marian shrine of Loreto (Italy). When the Basilica was almost empty at around 2 p.m., she was able to pray at length in what is considered to be the "House of Mary"

transported by angels from Nazareth to Loreto. One of her friends, Gemma, noticed that while she was praying, Vicka would turn her head from left to the right and was moving in a rather unusual way, smiling a lot. When they left the Basilica, Gemma, intrigued by what she saw, asked her, "Why were you turning your head like that?"

"It's because the Gospa came", she replied, "and as she was walking here and there in the room, I followed her with my eyes!" "Oh really, said Gemma, deeply moved, so she was walking among us?"

"Yes, replied Vicka, it's normal, she was at home, it's her house!"

We are truly living in a time of grace! How wonderful to know that our Heavenly Mother is so close to us, so tender, so normal, so human and so divine! Though we do not yet have the joy of seeing her with our own eyes, we can already grasp this beatitude, "Blessed are those who believe without having seen!"

### **Charity works miracles!**

Isabel Margarita Rojas Leiva, from Chile, belongs to the Lay Missionaries Consecrated to the Holy Spirit. She runs inner healing retreats all around the world. She received a special gift for healing the wounds of the heart. During one of her missions in Spain, she shared the following testimony:

"One day, my Bishop sent me for the first time to a juvenile prison. While I was with them, I started to play the guitar. They all came closer and formed a circle around me, adding their voices to mine, except for one young man who just stayed in a corner by himself. Once the songs ended, I headed towards him. However, I had barely approached when he yelled.

"Stay away!" Seeing my surprise he said it again: "Do not come any closer, I'm a bad person." Then he showed me a tattoo of Satan on his back.

At that point, without knowing why, I got the idea to ask: 'Tell me, when did your Mom kiss you for the last time?' "She never did," he replied. "And he burst into tears."

'Can I kiss you?' I asked. I don't know why I said that, because I didn't feel comfortable withit, but I kissed him anyway. Then we talked for a long time about the love of God.

When the time came to say goodbye, he said: "If you really love me, give me the cross you're wearing!" I must confess that this request crushed my heart. This crucifix had great sentimental value for me, because it was the last memory I had of my deceased mother. But I felt that God was asking me to make this sacrifice, and so, taking a deep breath, I replied: 'I love you. Here, take it!'

We said goodbye, then we lost contact. Seven years later, I met him during another mission. He had already been released from prison. With a face completely transfigured and beaming with joy he approached me and said: "Do you remember me, Isabel? We met in prison. You gave me this crucifix. Since then, I have been baptized! I now belong to the Church and regularly receive the sacraments."

I cannot describe the joy I felt at that moment. I knew, then, that Divine Mercy is infinite. Miracles take place when we open up to this Mercy, when we give ourselves completely without holding back."

### **Pentecost on the world on May 20!**

How can we not suffer at the sight of how the spirit of evil is at work in the world! It would be a trap to draw up the impressive list of Satan's actions in different parts of society. It would only serve to make him proud of being so successful! On the contrary, like the little Maryam of Bethlehem, we will hunker down and pray even more, and vehemently call upon the Holy Spirit!

Not only to be able to keep our head above water, but to walk with confidence on this path of holiness that our Blessed Mother has been showing us for nearly 37 years.

Venerable Marthe Robin (1902-1981), the French mystic who for 50 years experienced the Passion of Christ every week, prophesied a "New Pentecost of Love" for the world.

To see it to fruition, the Holy Spirit is looking for volunteers in order to reduce the time when Satan thinks he can get away with anything, causing terrible suffering those we love. We have the power to do this!

There are many invocations to the Holy Spirit, everyone can choose their own. Here is the one that has been prayed by generations of saints. It is good to recite it at least once a day if we want to remain under the guidance of the Spirit and resist all the tsunamis of evil...

COME, Holy Spirit, Creator blest,  
and in our souls take up Thy rest;  
come with Thy grace and heavenly aid  
to fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

O comforter, to Thee we cry,  
O heavenly gift of God Most High,  
O fount of life and fire of love,  
and sweet anointing from above.



Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts are known;  
Thou, finger of God's hand we own;  
Thou, promise of the Father, Thou  
Who dost the tongue with power imbue.

Kindle our sense from above,  
and make our hearts o'erflow with love;  
with patience firm and virtue high  
the weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we dread,  
and grant us Thy peace instead;  
so shall we not, with Thee for guide,  
turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow  
the Father and the Son to know;  
and Thee, through endless times confessed,  
of both the eternal Spirit blest.

Now to the Father and the Son,  
Who rose from death, be glory given,  
with Thou, O Holy Comforter,  
henceforth by all in earth and heaven.

Amen.

**Dear Children of Medjugorje, praise be to Jesus and Mary!**

A very interesting detail about Loreto transmitted by our Croatian friend :

According to the folk tradition and written chronicles, the birthplace house of the Blessed Virgin Mary arrived in the miraculous way from Nazareth on May 10, 1291. to Trsat above the city of Rijeka, Croatia. At that place, the house stayed for three years and went equally miraculously (carried by the angels) to the Italian town of Loreto (December 10, 1294), where it is still today.

The event impressed people so much that they immediately started to visit the Trsat Hill. Then the Croatian Prince Ivan Frankopan orderd the chapel to be built there on Trsat and his son Martin built the Franciscan monastery there with the church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Since Trsat lost the birth house of the Virgin Mary, 1367 Pope Urban V. sent the miraculous Marian painting to be venerated there.

When pope John Paul visited Croatia in 2003., he visited Trsat on Pentecost that year. Praying in front of the miraculous Gospa's painting he said: " Pray for me to Gospa of Trsat while I am alive and after I die".



May God bless you!

Sister Emmanuel+

Spread love everywhere you go.  
Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier.

# 25<sup>th</sup> Eucharistic Convention

## A Golden, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Eucharistic Convention

It may have been the Eucharistic Convention's silver anniversary, but what was on tap at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention was pure gold.

The balance and power of speakers – ranging from a NASA astronaut to New York rappers, to “Oprah Nuns” to a world leader in Moral Theology – was perhaps unmatched in the history of this blessed event. And that was appropriate, as this was the last year for the Convention in its present form and format.

“Deacon Mark Rivalland has been tasked by Bishop Patrick Dunn with taking the event forward, making it ever more relevant to the Church, and we are 100% behind that,” said Organiser John Porteous, who, along with his wife Beth, are retiring and handing the Convention baton to Mark.

This year's Convention actually started on the Thursday before the weekend event, when American imports and the Mother of Divine Mercy Refuge community blew the roof off the Te Atatu Community Centre with music, personal testimonies and preaching. Father Tony Ricard, a hurricane of a priest from New Orleans, gave a talk, and RabelztheMC and Stephen Eguino added Bronx rap to the delight of the big crowd.

“Houston, the Eagle has landed at Westlake Girls High School, Kia Ora,” NASA Astronaut Michael Hopkins, said on Friday to a jam-packed auditorium involved with “Girlboss”, an organisation that encourages young women to embrace future-focussed STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) fields.

“We wanted to do special things for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention, these two events were absolute crackers,” said John, adding the getting the NASA Astronaut took months and months of work, and overcoming at least one “No.”

Every speaker delivered outstanding talks, with Michael's out-of-this world talk on faith and space probably at the top of the list.

On Saturday, he talked about his responsibilities and the challenges he faced during six months aboard the International Space Station. Then he opened up the floor for questions from all the kiddies, gathered around him at the front.

Both of his talks included incredible videos and photos from space, including one of him in a space suit, tethered to the end of a long robotic arm. He was required to do two long, unplanned and dangerous space walks using that arm -- which was, “very stressful, like nothing else, a jumble of emotions”-- to repair a 350-kg pump module.

“To help me get through that, I received communion both mornings before I went on my space walks. That was very important to me. It allowed me to get through that very challenging time,” he said, adding that, for a few terrifying seconds, he was afraid the robotic arm was going to fling him out into space. NASA and his archdiocese allowed him to take a small pyx filled with consecrated hosts into space, and he was given permission to self-administer Holy Communion.

Michael grew up a “non-practicing Methodist”. He married a Catholic girl, Julie, and attended Mass with his growing family for decades before deciding to become Catholic, a short time before his time in space. He went through a modified RCIA programme, tailored around his training sessions in Russia and elsewhere.

Michael said he was deeply touched by the Convention, and the talks by his fellow speakers. He admitted surprise that NASA approved his visit to New Zealand, and said that speaking in public about his faith was “in many ways more challenging than walking in space!”

Father Brian Johnstone, CSsR gave in incredible powerful talk on “The Resurrection and the Eucharist” which deeply touched Convention go-ers, including fellow speakers Mother Assumpta and Sister Joseph Andrew.

Fr Johnstone, a distinguished international academic, began his talk about an experience we all have – receiving Holy Communion. “You experience a deep devotion, a strengthening of faith, new courage to go out and talk to others about the Lord, new power to overcome evil, in yourself, and to confront evil in the world. Now that experience, is an experience of the risen Lord... of the same power, the Divine power of the Spirit, which raised Jesus from the dead.”

In Luke Chapter 24, Father talked about the two Disciples who, unknowingly, came upon the Risen Christ along the road. Even though their hearts burned as Christ opened the Scriptures to them, they only came to “see” him after Jesus had blessed and broken bread. “When you receive the Lord in the appearance of bread, you will have the same experience; you may find your heart burning within you. That's what this talk is about. That's what the Gospel of Luke is about,” Father said.

“In our history, many Christians focused on the Passion. We understand His Passion was necessary to win salvation for our sins, so we put great importance on the death of Christ. But somewhat more difficult to see is what His Resurrection did for us.”

“Icons in Eastern churches tend to show there is community in the Resurrection. Jesus is shown standing above the black pit of hell. His feet are resting on the limbs of the cross. He reaches down and takes the people by the hand and pulls them vigorously out of the pit, and sits them beside himself,” said Father, adding that religious art from the West has tended to depict Jesus alone at the Resurrection, perhaps, he speculated, due to Western individualism.

Father quoted St Thomas Aquinas on the Resurrection: “The ‘rising’ (not “risen”) Jesus is acting to raise us up by the very same power that He was raised by God... When you receive the burning of your heart after receiving communion, that is coming from the very same power that raised Jesus.” St Thomas added that after the Resurrection, Christ was no longer limited by the constraints of the body, space or time. “The rising Christ acts everywhere and at all times.”

Fr Tony Ricard was perhaps more of a sage than showman at this year’s Convention, compared to 2014, when he strutted and preached up a storm. This year, he entered by slowly walking down the aisle singing an old “negro Spiritual”, “Oh Lord, couldn’t hear nobody pray.” He explained that in the 1800s, slave owners demanded black people pray in a certain way, so they had to secretly sing and worship at night in far-away places. A “listener” was posted by the master’s house. If he sang, “couldn’t hear nobody pray,” all was safe. And because it was illegal for blacks to read, they used “coded songs” to worship and to teach Scripture (“Let my people go.”)

Father’s family were already Catholic when they were captured in the Ivory Coast in Africa and sent to Louisiana as slaves. “People are mistaken when they think the Holy Spirit only went North after Pentecost. He also went south and west and east.” His family’s strong faith helped them in their long battle for freedom.

Father constantly praised the young people from the Mother of Divine Mercy, who sang so beautifully at Mass and performed joyous songs and dances, and even a powerful haka from the front of the auditorium. He stressed that the Catholic Church NEEDS young children and babies in Mass, and that our church MUST encourage young adults and nourish the unique prayers from other cultures.

Being cheeky, Father said we should all be honoured to be in his presence again because he was going to be a Saint. He even struck a comical pose to show what he wanted his statue to look like. Then he threatened if we gave him an ugly statue, he’d sick the pigeons on us. Switching back to being serious, he stressed that we ALL would either be Saints in Heaven with God for eternity, or we’d burn in hell. So when he asked for a second time who wanted to be a Saint, everyone’s hand shot up!

“When I was a public school teacher, I taught science. I taught my kids you are what you eat. Whatever you eat is going to become a part of why you are. If that’s true, then if you consume the body and blood of Christ, you must become the body and blood of Christ in this world. If we truly believe what we say about the Eucharist, then every time you come for communion, Jesus becomes a part of who you are... So wherever you go, you bring that presence with you. And I always say to young folks, if you go somewhere that you can’t take Jesus with you, you don’t need to go there. If you’re doing something that you don’t need Jesus doing with you, you don’t need to do it.”

Father said he left teaching for the priesthood after the Lord helped him understand that the priesthood was the best place for his gifts. “God gives you these gifts. We need to find a way to use them. No matter what your gift is, you need to be asking God, “Where can you use this for the sake of the kingdom?” Father made everyone laugh when he stressed, like in 2014, the need to embrace the two things his momma drilled into him – One, remember who you came from; and two, don’t be stupid!

Mother Assumpta, OP, and Sister Joseph Andrew, OP, two of the founders of the Order of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist (1997), gave brilliant talks, plus guided Adoration attended by over 100 people in a small upstairs alcove.

Mother Assumpta, Prioress General, began her talk with a Hail Mary and a thought -- that there are 215 million Christians being persecuted around the world, having to worship underground or be murdered for what convention-goers were able to do openly.

She said she was thrilled to have been asked to speak to Article 1324 in the Catechism: “The Eucharist is the Source and Summit of the Christian life. The other Sacraments, indeed all Ecclesiastical Ministries and works of the Apostolates, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it, for in the Blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch.”

She told a story about an elderly priest in Rome who found himself at the symphony next to the famous atheist and French philosopher Albert Camus. He admitted to the priest that, yes, he had read the Old and New Testament, so the priest asked what he thought. He said, “It’s too good to be true.” Mother said, “I agree with Camus, it is too good to be true, but we know it is true, just as we know that the Eucharist is the body and blood of Christ.”

She mentioned that a couple of months before his death, Bishop Fulton Sheen was asked who had inspired him – the Pope, a Bishop, a Priest, possibly a Nun? No, none of these, he said. He had been inspired by a little Chinese girl. She was in the back of her church when Communist soldiers broke in, smashed the

tabernacle and threw 32 consecrated hosts onto the floor. The priest, under house arrest, watched the little girl sneak into the church for the next 32 nights in a row for a holy hour. Before leaving each night, she would get on her knees and take one host on her tongue. When she had received the final host, she accidentally made a noise that awakened the guard, who beat her to death with his rifle. After hearing this story, Bishop Sheen promised the Lord to make a holy hour in front of the tabernacle every day for the rest of his life, and he did.

"I wonder if we really understand. Our faith tells us, but what if we could really comprehend that we are receiving God, Jesus Christ? Lord I believe, help my unbelief, at least that's my thing," Mother said, shaking her head at the impossibility of this truth.

Sister Joseph Andrew Saturday talk was entitled "The Eucharist: Completes Christian Initiation", with a special focus on Article 1322 in the Catechism. She said that, of all the Sacraments, the Church gives the most attention to the Eucharist.

St Irenaeus said if you receive the Eucharist in faith, you could become a Saint. This made her wonder, "How many communions have I been blessed to receive in my life, since second grade, all that goodness and love? Then why am I not a Saint?" It's a fair question, and one that she encourages everyone to ask themselves, along with: "Am I really prayerful? Do I really anticipate being able to go up to heaven in this Mass and receive God myself, the same way Mary received God?"

"Christ is in the tabernacle, so vulnerable. Do we realise He doesn't have to be there? He didn't have to create us. He didn't have to create this conference and give us the ability to even get here, and yet He is the reason we are here. He has known this moment would come from all of eternity; that He would be here."

Sister told several lovely stories about the Eucharist, including one about Blessed Imelda Lambertini (1322 – May 12, 1333), whom the Holy Father has a great devotion to. "I don't have that simplicity of heart that Blessed Imelda had," the Pope has said.

At just five, Imelda begged to receive Holy Communion, saying over and over again, "I want God, I need to receive him in Holy Communion." At age nine, possibly because her father was a Count, she was allowed to join the Dominicans.

At age 11, still too young to receive the Eucharist, she was at Mass internally saying "Jesus come to me, Jesus come to me," and a host left the priest's hand and travelled across the room into her mouth. When Mass was over, she remained behind. Later, the nuns found her, dead. "She so desired communion, that her first communion was the last one she ever needed this side of eternity, until God called her home and she was able to see Him face to face."

"The Eucharist inside us is heaven. It's as good as Mary had it. And that's what we receive in each Holy Communion," Sister added.

Aisha Te Kani gives amazing hugs. She was born with club feet and a heart on the outside of her chest, which is still there. When you hug her, you actually feel her heart beat. Even though the angels asked God: "Are you sure about this? Isn't that supposed to be inside?" she knows that God made her to His exact specifications for her unique mission. And the Protestant from Tauranga is one of the most dynamic, faithful, funny, hard-case speakers ever to bless the Eucharistic Convention.

Doctors said new-born Aisha wouldn't survive. Some family members warned, "She is a mistake, a curse for everything you've ever done wrong. You should put her in a home and forget about her."

But her Mum knew better and commuted from Tauranga to see her miracle baby at Greenlane Hospital for her first nine months of life. When doctors apologetically said there was no room in her chest for them to put her heart back inside, "Mum, was like, nah, she's all right. Leave her as she is. That's the way God made her."

As you might imagine, her childhood was hard. "I would pray to God before I went to sleep, and I would say, Okay God, right, in the morning, what I need for you to do is, while I'm asleep, just put my heart back inside my body, all right? And then fix my feet, all before I wake up, and then we'll be sweet."

But that didn't happen. So at age 10, sitting on the bathroom floor, crying her eyes out, she considered suicide. "God spoke to me in that moment. He said, 'Aisha do you know why I created you like that? I created you like that, so when people look at you, they see me... they can see that miracles still happen today. Because you weren't meant to be here, and every time you show up, the medical professionals with all the little letters after their names, all try to explain why you're still here. They look at you and say to themselves, how is that possible? I am God, and every now and then I just have to prove I am bigger than all of you. I have to prove that you need Me in your lives.'"

As if her heart and "funny feet" weren't enough of a cross, at 26, while working as a counsellor for the Sallies, she had a brain abscess that required emergency surgery. "I said to God, you know you messed up my body pretty bad. The bottom's pretty messed up. The middle is just weird, and now you're messing with my head. Because I have a relationship with my Father, I can speak to Him that way, and He answers me."

She realised it was all to glorify God. As she was in bed waiting to go into surgery, an orderly came by. "I just wanted to say it's an honour to meet you. Did you know that your name is all over this hospital? Everyone is talking about the girl with the heart on the outside of her body."

And as soon as she got out of surgery, her room was filled with medical students wanting to see her heart. It was another example of God using her to evangelise. "As soon as they come into my room, I tell them all about God... Christians need to become like ninjas. If we don't inject the world with the Gospel of Jesus, why are we here?"

"At 38 years old, I am not here just to have a good time, to make myself a nice life. Nah, that's my last priority. My first priority is to make sure that every time, every day I am awake, the declaration of my life is that Jesus is Lord. And that He reigns, and that He longs to be in a relationship with you and I. So whoever you are today, you're not just a normal human being. You are called by God. You are a supernatural being."

The mother of Mexico's Aurora Zacarias died when she was a child, and the tragedy tipped her father into alcoholism, abandoning the children. By God's grace, Aurora and her siblings did not end up as street kids or in gangs. Instead, they were welcomed into Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH), which is Spanish for Our Little Brothers and Sisters. She has become a successful speaker and business woman, thanks to NPH.

As if all these amazing speakers were not enough, the Convention featured two rappers from the Bronx in New York City. And even though they got stuck in Houston for a day due to travel problems, they hit the ground running when they arrived in Auckland on the Thursday before the Convention.

RabelztheMC and Steven Eguino, along with members of the Mother of Divine Mercy Refuge also performed at the Convention over the weekend. And convention-goers were also blessed to hear from Michelle Kaufman, Director of Family Life International, and Margaret and Gerry Smy, who carry out works of mercy to the elderly, sick and housebound.

As always, the Convention included daily Mass, with Bishop Patrick Dunn kindly celebrating the opening Friday night Mass.

Adds John Porteous: "It has been a special privilege for Beth and myself to have organised the Eucharistic Convention for the past 25 years. We would like to thank each and every one of the countless hundreds of people who have volunteered with us to shape this event over the years.

The Eucharistic Convention has become a unique and charismatic event that many from around the country, and even further afield, get so much out of. We now hand over the responsibility of leadership to Deacon Mark Rivalland, who Bishop Patrick Dunn has appointed as the new Director of the Eucharistic Convention.

Please continue to support Deacon Mark in his efforts to continue planning the annual event. It is a big job, but Deacon Mark is excited at the prospect and up for the challenge. We invite you to consider some feedback we have had from some of the guests who contributed to the Convention this year.

**"The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life."**

### ***Feedback from Speakers at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention***

Dear John

How great it was to be able to return "HOME" to catch up with my New Zealand family, the Mother of Divine Mercy Refuge kids. I want to come back; hopefully something can be arranged

***Father Tony Ricard***

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John...Thanks for the note and thanks for the invitation to the Convention. I had a wonderful time and was inspired by your other speakers.

Tell Beth hello and congratulations on all your years of dedication to this amazing event.

***Astronaut Mike Hopkins***

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Dear John,

What a wonderful spiritual out-of-body experience it was for me to attend and be a part of the 2018, 25th Eucharistic Convention!

I truly enjoyed the messages delivered by the Holy Spirit through the guest speakers. My most enjoyable experience was fellowshiping with the men, women, and children of MDM. It was through their testimonies that I was able to deliver such an honest testimony of my own. The value of having such an event goes beyond the expression of words. It is with great honour that I was able to attend and participate; not only to fly on a plane for the first time but to leave the United States for the first time as well. May our Lord continue to bless you and your family and please continue to keep in touch with me for future events.

Warm regards,

***Melvin Windley (RabelztheMC)***

---

Dear John

I am feeling very thankful to have the opportunity to visit NZ and could share with many people part of my life. It helps me tremendously to be more positive and feed my soul with good memories.

The Eucharistic Convention was awesome. I have never been in an event like this, everything was very organized, people were great and it was a really nice.

Only a thing would be great, for next event would be awesome if all speakers can reunited for a short talk. It was a shame I could not say THANKS to each one for their talk. Our talks in the end is a purpose in Common "Our Faith in God"

Thanks again for your support to make possible my visit to NZ.

God bless you always.

**Aurora Zacarias**

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Land of the 'Rings' – for the LORD, of course!!

What country lies 13,775 kilometers (8,600 miles) to the southwest of Michigan? New Zealand of course!! After an 18 hour flight in that direction on Easter Tuesday, Mother Assumpta, OP and Sr Joseph Andrew Bogdanowicz, OP, landed on the north island (Te Ika-a-Māui) 2 days later. Why so? One must cross the international date-line, several times actually, thus losing -- and then regaining around certain islands -- and finally losing once more an entire day, which was only regained on the flight back to Michigan!

The occasion for the visit was the 25th annual Eucharistic Convention held on the North Island. Imagine Sister's joy when she received, months in advance, an emailed invitation from John Porteous for herself and Mother to participate in the Convention by delivering two addresses each! Visiting New Zealand, for many North Americans, is somewhat of a dream that they wouldn't expect to come true! Yet here was the invitation – and, as John assured the Sisters that he prays a great deal regarding his decisions of who to invite and believes the Holy Spirit is behind all his decisions—the invitation was ultimately coming from the Holy Spirit! The Sisters found both the country and the people to be of their own distinctive beauty – or "loveliness" as these people would express such! The Eucharistic was a most fitting event to welcome the Sisters and a host of people of all ages who had travelled distances also. Each person held his/her own unique gifts to bring to such a marvelous gathering of people and the speakers were phenomenal! John Porteous was correct in saying the Holy Spirit and Mother Mary put these amazing Conventions together, and it is something no one should ever miss – especially if they already live in New Zealand! Our Lord must be most pleased!

The Sisters wish to extend their most special thanks to so many Kiwis but most of all to John Porteous, Jean Simpson, Bill Moore, Deacon Mark Rivalland, and all who worked so hard behind the scenes!!

Signed:

**Mother Assumpta Long, OP**

**Sister Joseph Andrew Bogdanowicz, OP**



John Porteous



Mark Rivalland

***Whatever you do for your family, your children, your husband, your wife, you do for God. All we do, our prayers, our work, our suffering, is for Jesus.*** "It's a sobering thought to consider that all we do to and for our children and spouse – good and bad – is a reflection of how we treat Jesus every day. I have a card on my refrigerator with a saying from Mother Teresa that correlates with this thought: "At the end of the day, I need to ask myself only two things – What did I do to Jesus today? What did I do for Jesus today?" **We can ask ourselves a variation of this: "What did I do to my family today? What did I do for my family today?"** According to Mother Teresa, they are the same question.





EUCCHARISTIC CONVENTION 2018





# THE POWER OF THE ROSARY

“Through Mary to Jesus” is a beautiful phrase that reminds all of us who believe in the powerful intercession of Mary our blessed Mother, as She shines like a morning star leading us to the dawn of grace, Jesus our Loving Lord. We as loving children of Mary are called to meditate on the mysteries of the rosary and to discover the power of God and experience His mercy with Mary our Mother. In the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and glorious mysteries, we reflect the loving mercy of God revealed in and through Jesus.

It is from my parents, I learned to say the rosary as a little child and grew in the loving devotion to Mary our Blessed Mother. Since then I have never failed to approach Mother Mary with much love and childlike confidence in times of struggles of my own and of others. I am ever grateful to God for calling me to belong to the congregation dedicated to Mary- Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM).

Blessed Virgin is my Mother, guide example and inspiration to be faithful to God’s call and to say ‘Yes’ to God’s will daily in my life. “ .... Mary offered her whole being in complete and loving disponsible in faith and humble service so that the Spirit might carry out the Father’s work in her.” (FMM Constitution article No.2). In my personal life, when I say there is someone who is so close to me to teach me to follow Christ, it is none other than Mary My loving Mother.

Praying the rosary personally, as families and communities brings us closer to Jesus and deepen our understanding and experience of mysteries of Jesus. Mother Mary during her apparitions in various places continue to call us her children to pray the Rosary. “Rosary is my favorite prayer” said St. John Paul II. So all of us who have learned from our childhood to pray the rosary and to meditate on the mysteries of the rosary to know the power it brings to us in order to face the stormy weather of day to day life. Personally, I have received many blessings and graces from our Blessed Mother through he recitation of the rosary. I do carry my rosary with me always and I believe it is the powerful weapon against the devil.

October is the month dedicated to Our Lady of the rosary and in our churches, convents, and homes we unite ourselves to honor our Blessed by the recitation of the rosary. During the month of October 2016, I got a rare opportunity through a kindhearted person to join her son and other family members to go to medjugorje. The pilgrimage was organized by the Super Link travels. We were accompanied by the Director of super Link Mr. Rodney Koelmeyer.

It was during the visit to the apparition hill where Mother Mary appeared to the children, I was praying in front of the statue of mother Mary and approached the crucifix, with the prayer in my heart for all those who asked my prayer. I remembered very especially Ruby aunty who lost her rosary during the journey. I took my rosary from the pocket and kept on the cross and prayed. While praying I felt there is something rough like rosary beads other than my rosary and I heard Mother Mary from behind telling me “Take this rosary and give it to Ruby aunty”. I was filled with joy and wonderment, and still with closed eyes removed my hands from the cross and opened my hands to behold a lovely white rosary with roses engraved in each bead and a lovely pink opened roses in between the 10 beads. I was so happy and thanked Mother Mary for giving this special gift to be given as a gift. There is another special feature of this rosary is that on the cross there is Jesus, and Mother Mary is holding Him.

I cannot thank God enough for this wonderful experience through the mediation of Blessed Mother Mary, during this pilgrimage. While thanking and praising God for the gift of our Blessed Mother, I humbly request all those who read this article, to pray the rosary from the heart as individuals, families and communities and obtain many graces from God through Mother Mary. By uniting ourselves with Mother Mary let us pray for the whole world, Church, country and our families. Let us be attentive to the loving request of our dearest Mother “pray the rosary”, and continue our journey – earthly pilgrimage with faith, love and hope in God our loving Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

*Sr.Mary Luvina Fmm , Sri Lanka. Tel: 011 2864880*

## **In New Zealand and Australia**

Over 200 Catholics are offering Catholics “**B & B**” for \$35.00 one person, or \$30.00 per person for 2 or more persons per night, includes continental breakfast. This is a wonderful way for Catholics to meet and enjoy the company of other Catholics. If you wish to become a host or if you wish to purchase a book with all the details of hosts, the cost is \$15., includes postage, contact or order from Marie Anderson, 2 Brent Place, Christchurch, 8053, Phone 03 3595 541, email, [marie.ian@xtra.co.nz](mailto:marie.ian@xtra.co.nz).

## Pioneer

The Pioneer Total Abstinence Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus  
was founded by Fr James A. Callan S.J. in Dublin on 28 December 1898.

AIM OF THE ASSOCIATION

Peace and Harmony in the Home

The Pioneer Contribution

The spread of the Christian virtue of temperance throughout Ireland and abroad

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Prayer, an alcohol-free life style and public witness to the infinite love of the Sacred Heart by wearing the pin

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A monthly family magazine and use of other media

Promoting Pioneer membership worldwide **Contact John 09 522 1728 or Mary 09 620 4605**

## Harboring Anger and Resentment Will Eat You Up

By a Friend of Medjugorje

August 2, 2017

Many go through life being without life in their life. A t-shirt seen recently on someone at an airport said, "*Not everyone has lived, but everyone will die.*" Love emanates from love. Love never dies. It will live in those you leave behind when you die and therefore, a part of you will still live on earth. Leaving love is greater than what you leave in your Will after you die. Loved ones will flourish more in life by the love you leave, than any money from your Will you leave for their life. Life is only life through love. In the song, "It's a Hard Life," by Nanci Griffith, she writes of the "hard life" that comes from hatred:

*It's a hard life, it's a hard life It's a very, very hard life*

*It's a hard life wherever you go And if we poison our children with hatred*

*Then the hard life is all that they'll know And there ain't no place in this world for those kids to go*

Our Lady said many things in Her message today, yet where She ended was "forgiveness." To say that we love Jesus, and for our prayers to have worth, we must forgive. Our Lady says it plainly and very clearly why so many prayers of people are not answered: "...I am teaching you to...thank Him by loving Him and always anew forgiving your neighbours..." It will be shown that by Our Lady's own words, if you don't forgive, your prayers are of no use.

Malcolm Gladwell is a popular author who knows how to tell a good story. But one of the stories he tells changed his own life and brought him back to his faith. He was in attendance at a funeral in which a young girl had been kidnapped, bound disgracefully and left to die in the cold winter of Winnipeg, Canada, in 1984. When the girl's parents were told, after several months, that her body had been found, they went into their bedroom and made the decision to try to love whoever killed her, and forgive. When the parents were finally able to lay their daughter to rest, who was still freshly preserved from the cold, the father stood up before everyone at the funeral, with the casket behind him, and said of the one who had perpetrated this evil against their daughter:

"We would like to know who the person or persons are so we could share, hopefully, a love that seems to be missing in these peoples' lives. I don't believe the person who did this had loving parents or a circle of friends who thought the world of him or he wouldn't have done a deed like this."

It wasn't an easy choice to make, and there were many who criticized them for doing so, but they knew if they didn't forgive, **they would risk losing every other good in their lives, including their marriage and their family.** The mother of the young girl said, "*Anger is very natural. It comes out of fear, it comes out of dishonor, it's a reaction to anything that threatens us and it's addictive. To forgive and say, I'm going to let it go, give it to the higher power...and then find something good in it, it's not an easy process.*" Gladwell was so moved by the faith of this young girl's parents that he felt the desire to return to the faith of his childhood.

On October 2, 2006, a gunman trapped 10 young Amish girls in their one-room schoolhouse in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, tied them up and then opened fire. Five were killed. Five survived. And then he ended his own life. The attacker, 32-year-old Charlie Roberts, left a legacy of shame and horror for his wife, young children, parents and family. It was a heinous crime, made more so because it was perpetrated against a peace-loving people. It was news that shocked the nation and world. Chuck and Terri Roberts were the parents of the troubled man. The day of the shooting, Terri was at work and heard sirens, which was unusual in the small rural community. She wondered what they were for. Then the phone rang. It was her husband. He told her to come immediately to their son, Charlie, and his

wife Marie's house. Terri said: "As I hurried down the stairway from my office, a sense of foreboding squeezed my stomach. The drive was only 10 minutes, but I heard on the radio that there had been a shooting at an Amish schoolhouse nearby. Children were among the dead and injured. Charlie drove a truck for his father-in-law's business collecting milk from area dairy farms, and he often parked right near the school. Fear clutched my heart. Could he have intervened to help and been killed? As soon as I got to Charlie's house and pushed through the crowd of police and reporters, I asked a trooper if my son was alive. 'No, ma'am,' he responded somberly. I turned to my husband. With pain in his eyes, he choked out, 'It was Charlie. He killed those girls.' All I recall is falling to the ground in a fetal position, wailing. Eventually, we were walked to the police cruiser and driven home. My husband is a retired police officer. I could not imagine his feelings as he was escorted out like a perpetrator after 30 years of being the one who did the escorting." Chuck and Terri were neighbors and friends to many Amish in the small farming community. After being escorted home, they broke down, sobbing.

"Chuck sat at our breakfast table, crying. I had not seen my strong, protective husband shed tears since his father passed away years before. Now he could not even lift his head. He'd covered his face with a dish towel to control the flow of tears, his eyes sunken and dull."

Chuck said they were going to have to leave. They couldn't live in this town where their son had done such evil to such good people. Recalling that moment ten years later, in October 2016, Terri wrote what she called, "The First Miracle," that would lead them out of the hell they had just entered:

"As we sat and sobbed, I looked through our window and caught sight of a stalwart figure dressed in black. It was our neighbor, Henry Stoltzfoos, whom we'd known for years. He was an Amish man...Striding up to the front door, Henry knocked. Mind you, Henry had friends and relatives whose daughters had died in that schoolhouse, at the hands of our son. Like all the Amish, he had every reason to hate us. But as I opened the door, I saw that Henry didn't look angry. Instead, compassion radiated from his face. Walking over to Chuck, he put one hand on his shoulder. The first words I heard him speak took my breath away: 'Roberts, we love you. This was not your doing. You must not blame yourself.'"

Henry was the first miracle, but there were more to come. **"...Because to love my Son means to forgive..."**

The next day, the day after the shooting, a group of Amish leaders came to the home of the parent's of Marie, the wife of the attacker who was now a widow. Every one of the Amish had a family member who had died in the schoolhouse. Marie's father went out to meet them, and he immediately found himself in the midst of their embrace where they all wept and prayed together. The day of the shooting, Marie and her children had been brought food by other Amish families. **"...My Son is not loved if the neighbor cannot be forgiven..."**

In the week that followed, the funerals of the five young girls were held. The last funeral was of Charlie Roberts. Though Chuck and Terri were deeply moved by the forgiveness being offered to them by the Community, they were struggling to forgive their son who was the cause of so much pain and destruction. A father of one of the girls who had been killed had visited Chuck and Terri in their home. Terri said: "I shared how brokenhearted I was that our son Zach, (Charlie's brother), would not attend Charlie's funeral—he couldn't forgive him. I asked him to pray that Zach would have a change of heart. 'Of course,' he said. 'Would you like me to call him?'"

A few days later, at the funeral of his brother, Zach was there. He said that the pleas of his parents softened his heart, but it was the phone call of the grieving father that had been the "turning point" that led him to the funeral. **"...there is not an effort to comprehend the neighbor, if he is judged..."** At Charlie's funeral, the media from all the major news outlets came with their cameras and reporters wanting to capture the site of the grieving Roberts family. But suddenly, at least 40 Amish men and women, started coming out from around the side of the graveyard and fanned out into a semi-circle between the grave site and the media making a solid wall to cut off the photographers and grant the family a moment of privacy. Again, Chuck and Terri Roberts were deeply touched by the compassion being shown to them by this devastated community. Terri remembers what she felt at that moment: "Fresh anger shook me then. I could think only of the terrible wrong Charlie had done. At that moment I was not sure that I could ever forgive the unspeakable evil he'd perpetrated on these young parents, his own children, our family. Yet neither could I stop loving Charlie. He was my son." **"....My Son has left you His foot-prints to make it easier for you to follow Him. Do not be afraid..."**

Terri continued: *"I held on to my composure as our Amish guests stepped forward to express their condolences. Among the first to approach us were Chris and Rachel Miller, whose two daughters, Lena and Mary Liz, had died in their arms. Murmuring a greeting to Chuck and me, they added softly, 'We are sorry for your loss.' Sorry for our loss. I could barely choke out a response. Our son had taken the lives of their daughters and they were comforting us! It was a moment of sudden, healing clarity for me. **Forgiveness is a choice...forgiveness isn't a feeling.** These sweet parents were as grief-stricken as I was, their hearts broken like mine. I did not have to stop feeling anger, hurt and utter bewilderment at the horrific decisions Charlie had made. I only had to make a choice: to forgive. And I understood the*

other part of what the Amish had said: **If we cannot forgive, how can we be forgiven? I am not a murderer, but I have committed wrongs as well. And I was forgiven! How can I, in turn, not offer the forgiveness I've received—even to my own son? Especially to my own son.**” “... **My children, of what use is your prayer if you do not love and forgive?...**”

The forgiveness offered to the Roberts family set them on a path of healing and forgiveness themselves. They did not move away, but accepted the friendship offered to them to remain and heal with their Amish neighbors. One of the young girls who survived the shooting, Rosanna, was injured badly, being shot in the head. Ten years after the shooting, she is still tube-fed and in a wheelchair. She has seizures and cannot talk. Terri asked the parents if she could help with Rosanna once a week. She reads to her, bathes her and dries her hair when she comes to visit. Terri says she doesn't know if Rosanna knows who she is, but she has a sense that she does. “...**All the more love that you give, so much more of it you will also receive...**”

Aaron Esh was the father of one of the boys that was in the school that day. When asked about his own walk of forgiveness, he said that with Charlie dead, “there was nowhere for the anger to go. There had been no foreshadowing of his ghastly act. Charlie was known only as a loving husband and father, a good neighbor.” Esh knew that **harboring anger and resentment “will eat you up.”** Another father who lost a daughter in the tragedy said it has been a journey for him. “I still made that immediate choice in principle to forgive. But it took me a few years until I could feel that I really meant it inside me, to forgive Charlie....I felt a great weight falling off me.” “...**Do not permit yourselves to be discouraged because much prayer and sacrifice are necessary for those who do not pray, do not love and do not know my Son. You help, by seeing your brothers in them...**”

Terri doesn't know what would have happened if she and her family were shown rejection and hatred instead of love and forgiveness through this tragedy. She said, “Over the last decade, the love our family was given has inspired me to spread the message of forgiveness wherever I can, often hand in hand with the Amish families my son had harmed...I think it's a message the world needs.” In fact, when the school killings of Virginia Tech<sup>1</sup> and Sandy Hook<sup>2</sup> happened, Terri accompanied the Amish families whose children had been killed by Charlie Roberts in Nickel Mines, when they visited the communities who had freshly experienced the same horror. They joined “hand in hand” to bring the message of forgiveness. “...**Love which emanates from love illuminates the world...when my Son comes to earth anew, He will look for love in your hearts...**”

So, what about you? Are you finding that your prayers aren't being answered? Is it because you are harboring anger, bitterness, unforgiveness in your heart for someone, or even unforgiveness of yourself? Perhaps you may not even be aware that you have unforgiveness or resentment in your heart. Were you convicted when you read Our Lady's message today? Was there a name that came to mind when you first read Her words? Have your prayers not been answered because you have not forgiven? Our Lady said on June 2, 2014:“...**There is no love without prayer – there is no prayer without forgiveness; because love is prayer – forgiveness is love. My children, God created you to love and you love so as to forgive...**”

Our Lady knows it is difficult to forgive sometimes. That is why She says that She is here to help us.“...**according to the will of the Heavenly Father, as the mother of Him who loves you, I am here with you to help you...Apostles of my love, harken to my voice within you, feel my motherly love...**”

Our Lady knows that in order for us to forgive, we must have the experience of being loved and therefore, forgiven. This is what happened to Terri and Chuck. With Our Lady's new efficacy, Our Lady will speak to you and you can feel Her Motherly love in your very being. She will lead you to the grace to enable you to:“...**pray, pray by doing, pray by giving, pray with love, pray in work and thoughts, in the name of my Son...**”

Lastly, when Our Lady said: “...**My Son has left you His footprints to make it easier for you to follow Him...**,” it's not possible that She would say that without referring to the beautiful and treasured poem about faith and trust in God, “*Footprints in the Sand.*” Our Lady said: September 2, 2016 “...**Nothing is by chance...**” It is not **by chance** that Our Lady said, “Jesus' footprints” without Her having in Her heart, knowledge of a writing known as, “*Footprints in the Sand;*” a widespread writing that is well known around the world. We include it that you may read it in light of Our Lady's message today, knowing that She will “enlighten” you to a deeper understanding of these age-old words about faith, trust, perseverance and “...**many are the acts of love which He has done for you. I am teaching you to see them, to comprehend them and to thank Him...**”

# Footprints in the Sand

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord.

Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.

In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand.

Sometimes there were two sets of footprints.

Other times there were one set of footprints.

This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life,

When I was suffering from anguish, sorrow or defeat,

I could see only one set of footprints.

So I said to the Lord, "You promised me Lord

That if I followed You, You would walk with me always.

But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life

There have only been one set of footprints in the sand.

Why, when I needed you most,

You have not been there for me?

The Lord replied,

"The times when you have seen only one set of footprints,

It was then that I carried you.

Anonymous

The Amish had to forgive others to be free. Terri and Chuck had to forgive themselves to be free. The Amish witness spurred them to not only forgive but to forgive themselves. Many people will never be right until they forgive others and/or forgive themselves. Life's too short not to forgive and you will teach future generations to do the same. "And if we poison our children with hatred, then a hard life is all that they'll know."

With Forgiveness,

*Friend of Medjugorje*



# The Gift of faith

What an event filled few months. We had a wonderful time at the Eucharistic Convention, a retreat time of listening to some marvellous speakers. Bernadette has written all about it in the Editors column, and we have had a write up from Bill Moore, the PR man for the Convention.

Thanks go to Miriam, who did the montage of photos from the convention. As you may have noticed, we are spreading the load of the magazine between the three of us, plus Bernadette's daughter, who is an accountant, will be taking over more of the administration, freeing me up. I keep saying that as we get older, we should be getting more smarter with our time. Doesn't always work, but we are trying.

Have included all our emails in the front of the magazine, so feel free to contact any one of us. At the convention, the Catholic Enquiry Centre talked of networking through our websites. We hope that this will happen soon so that if anyone contacts us on the webpage, they will also be directed to other webpages. All this technology is a "bit" beyond me, but Bob Gill, our webmaster said it is all possible. Also if anyone wants to download there PDF copy from the webpage each March, June, September, and December, they are most welcome to do this, just let us know and we can take them off the mailing list.

We have had our three month old granddaughter and daughter staying with us for the last two weeks, a wonderful time, lovely to have a baby in the house. Her husband is renovating their house in Tauranga, so decided it might be easier to have time with mum and dad instead of the hammering and dust that goes with renovations. We also had an excited call from Brisbane, our son and his partner Beks, have just got engaged. Wonderful news, we head over to Brisbane in a couple of weeks time, so looking forward to spending time with them and looking at wedding preparations.

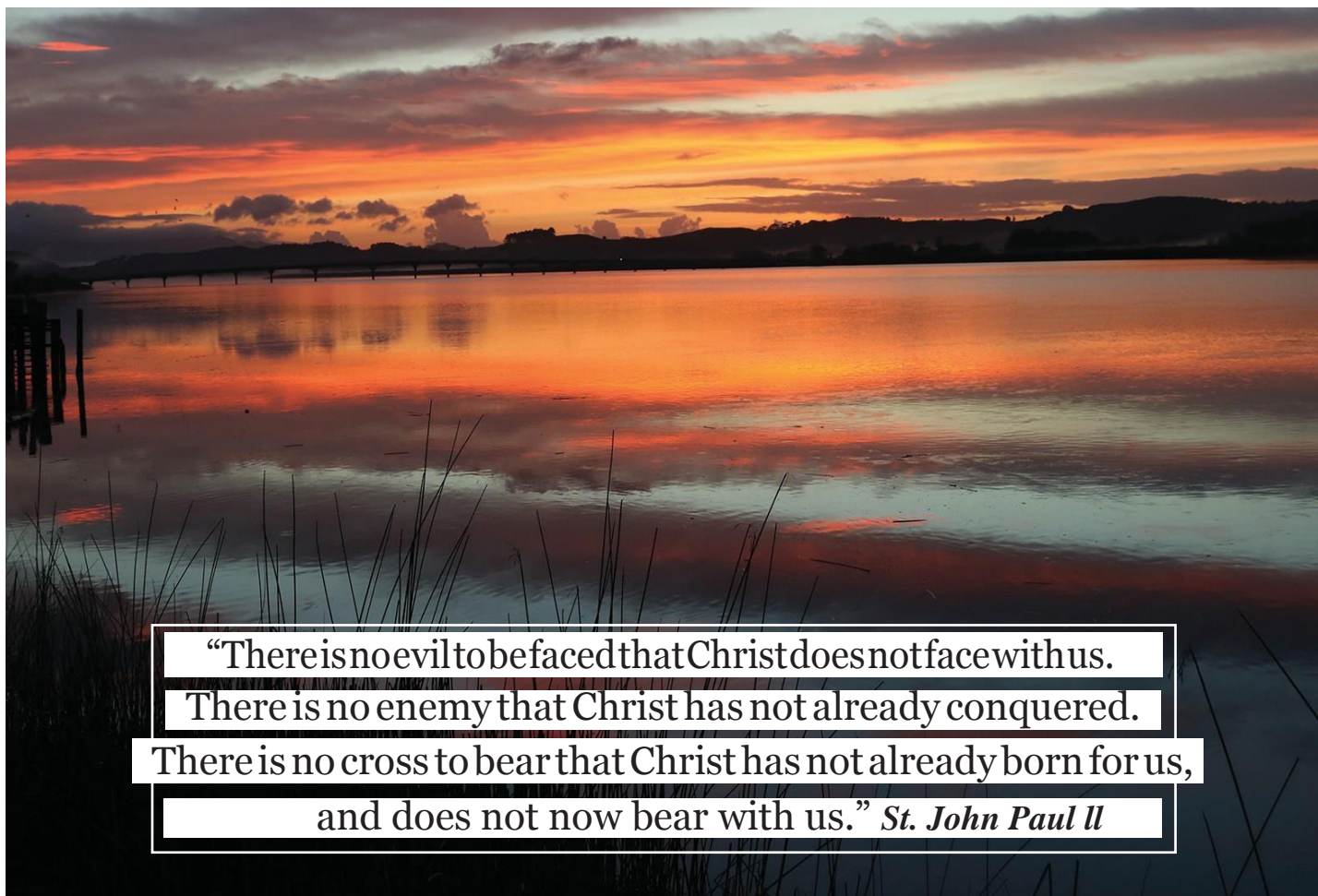
As I was preparing the magazine, over the last few weeks, I had a slight meltdown and was ranting and raving at the Lord, that if this is how He treats His friends !!!!!!! Within a few minutes of my "little" meltdown, I got a phone call from my sister to say that a relative of ours had been given a few months to live with an aggressive cancer, he had a young family. In the conversation we talked about other family members going through tough times with illnesses, financial and job struggles, and I thought, what have you got to moan about Sarah. YOU know that The Lord is looking after you, He shows you in so many ways, and just because things don't go how you want them, you loose your patience. It was a time of putting things into perspective. I also had a friend say to me that we deal with things of today, not tomorrow. Today is enough for us to look at. The Lord talks to us in so many ways, whether through other people and or through scripture, but He is there whenever we need Him.

*Many blessings. Sarah Moran*

***I am not sure exactly what heaven will be like, but I know that when we die and it comes time for God to judge us, he will not ask, 'How many good things have you done in your life?' rather he will ask, 'How much love did you put into what you did?'***

People are so busy, so occupied that they have no time to even smile at each other. They have no time to enjoy each other, to be together, to smile, to pray together, no time. Father and mother very busy, children are left to themselves. No one in the house; the old people are put in some institution. When you come home you sit in front of the television, as relaxation little bit, but you have again no time to talk to your children, to talk to your family people, to pray together. This loss of that praying together has made it difficult for people to stay together. But if they pray together they will stay together and if they stay together they will love one another, they'll have time for each other. This is what today is missing and that missing gap has to be filled again by bringing back Christ into the family. Abortion has been the greatest destroyer of the family life. By destroying the child they are destroying the very life of the family. That is why we need to pray to Our Lady to help us to go in search of the child and bring the child back home, for it's the child that unites the family. And if prayer comes in, that love and tenderness [will] be [there]. Maybe still people will be poor and in need of things, but that warmth and that concern and that sharing will be always there.

*Quotes from Mother Teresa*



“There is no evil to be faced that Christ does not face with us.  
 There is no enemy that Christ has not already conquered.  
 There is no cross to bear that Christ has not already borne for us,  
 and does not now bear with us.” *St. John Paul II*

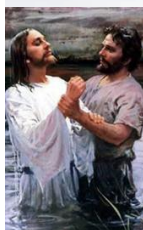
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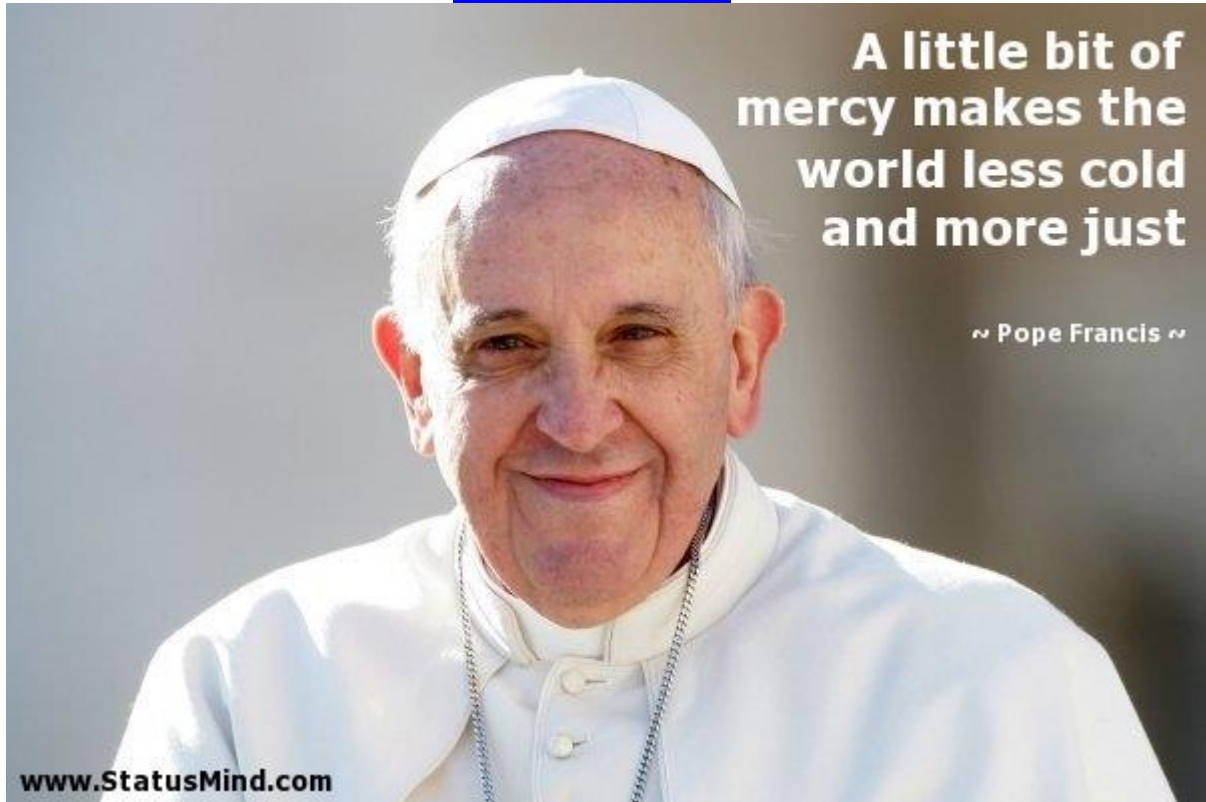
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We would appreciate it if all readers WHO HAVE NOT DONE SO would fill in the questionnaire below. Any comments, requests or criticisms will be welcome.

AS OUR MAGAZINE IS FREE, THIS IS NOT A REQUEST FOR DONATIONS, but to ensure that it is actually read. *(If those who reply wish to give a financial contribution, we would be very grateful, but this is not essential.)*

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