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OUR LADY'S MONTHLY MESSENGER

THE MIR CENTER OF WESTERN COLORADO

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On entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. (Mt 2: 11)

**Our Lady of Medjugorje's
Monthly Message of
December 25th, 2024:**

Dear children! Pray, pray, pray that peace may begin to reign in every heart and prevail over every evil and peacelessness. Thank you for having responded to my call.” (With Ecclesiastical approval)

On the 25th of each month, Our Lady gives a message through the visionary Marija Pavlovic-Lunetti for the villagers in the parish of Medjugorje and for all those who choose to follow her on the path to holiness.



The Holy Family



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The Doctor Who Attended Fr Slavko as He Died Has Become a Priest

by Simona Amabene from laluciademaria.it

"I have traveled a long way to get to God, I was looking for the meaning of life. I was so sick. Too sick. I was also in Rev. Moon's sect and among Jehovah's Witnesses. One morning, it was the end of June 1988, it happened that I looked out of my window, in Innsbruck, and saw the streets full of people but I didn't know why. I went down the street to understand, and I discovered that the pope, John Paul II, was about to come to visit and would pass right under my house. So I decided to participate in the Holy Mass he celebrated. However, during that Mass, a spiritual struggle began."

I was tormented by a question: "Is Jesus really present in the Eucharist or is this just a piece of bread? Then, I decided at that moment: Yes, that is Jesus! He is present!" Since that time I have never missed Sunday Mass. And I felt great joy.



The spot where Fr. Slavko died at the top of Cross mountain

Then the desire to go to Medjugorje was born in my heart, and it happened on the thirtieth day when I was reciting a prayer to consecrate myself to Our Lady. And I consecrated myself in church, at the moment of the apparition. This happened while there was still the war. It was 1993, and it was during the Youth Festival.

"In the meantime I had become a doctor, and after some time I went for a period to Medjugorje, to the Community of the Beatitudes. It was November 24, 2000 that fell on a Friday. Raining. The weather was very bad. I asked myself whether or not to go for the *Way of the Cross*, because when it rains it is very slippery there and it is not easy to climb up. Finally, inside me, I was convinced and said: I am going up there to pray this *Way of the Cross*".

At that time, I didn't know, that is, I didn't even think about a vocation to the priesthood. I thought of getting married, creating a family. I set out to do the *Via Crucis*. Father Slavko was a few stations in front of me with about twenty people from the parish. I thought: "But look: you wonder if you are going or not going to do the *Way of the Cross*, and Father Slavko almost every day climbs one of these two hills".

And when I was at the thirteenth station, people were running. I thought people had gone crazy because it was dangerous, very slippery. Then I saw that Father Slavko was lying on a stone. I approached, looked and saw that his heart was suffering and that he was dying. We tried to revive him but to no avail.



Fr. Slavko Barbaric who died at the top of Cross Mountain

Our Lady's Annual Apparition to Jakov: December 25th, 2024

At the last daily apparition to Jakov Colo on September 12th, 1998, Our Lady told him that henceforth he would have one apparition a year, every December 25th, on Christmas Day. This is also how it was this year. The apparition began at 2:45 pm and lasted 8 minutes. Our Lady came with little Jesus in her arms. Through Jakov, Our Lady gave the following message:

Today, on this day of grace, in a special way I am calling you not to live a life striving for earthly goals and not to seek peace and joy in earthly things, because in this way darkness takes over your life and you do not see the meaning of your life. Little children, open the doors of your hearts to Jesus, permit Him to take over your entire life so that you may begin to live in God's love and mercy. My children, only with Jesus in your hearts will you come to know the true goal of your life and long for eternal salvation. I am blessing you with my motherly blessing. With Ecclesiastical approval.

So I shouted to the people: "Pray, pray: Father Slavko is dying!" At that moment the rain stopped, the rain stopped: this happened between the thirteenth and fourteenth stations. From there you can see the church, it was illuminated by the sun and you could see a small rainbow. The clouds were in a position that the sun was shining on them from above. At that moment I knew that Father Slavko was in heaven.

In his Franciscan hood I saw a pomegranate that then disappeared. Then we took Father Slavko to carry him down. It was very difficult because it was so slippery. On that occasion I prayed: "Father Slavko, now you are in heaven: give me a part of your spirit, send me a part of your spirit".

As we carried him down, since he was already dead, his hands swung left and right. One of his hands touched me on the shoulder behind, not really in the shoulder, but in the back. I gave myself this explanation, as if Father Slavko were telling me: "I have done my *Way of the Cross*, now yours begins".

Then I went down. I went to the church, because I needed peace. For more than an hour I cried without knowing why. Later I understood that Father Slavko asked for the grace for me not to look only at myself. At that moment I made the decision: "I will become a priest!".

I entered the seminary in Austria, and eventually, I became a priest, and there is nothing more beautiful in the world than being a priest. The priest can give God to His people: who can do anything like that? I want to thank Our Lady, I want to thank Father Slavko, but above all our Heavenly Father. Jesus is risen: He is truly risen!

From the Diary of Sister Emmanuel

www.childrenofmedjugorje.com

On November 25th, 2024, the visionary, Marija, received the following monthly message:

“Dear children! In this time of the grace of expectation, I desire to call you to prayer for Advent to be prayer of the family. In a special way, little children whom I tenderly embrace, I encourage you to prayer for peace in the world; for peace to prevail over peacelessness and hatred. Thank you for having responded to my call.” (With ecclesiastical approval.)

The angels of Bethlehem

As Christmas approaches, our hearts yearn to fully experience the graces that Heaven offers us on this wonderful day when the Savior of the World is born, and which Mary calls The Day of Joy. Among the best distributors of joy, let's think of the multitude of Angels who sang of the glory of God above the little shepherds tending their flocks in the fields of Bethlehem. Why don't we invoke the help of the Angels, when we need joy so badly?



Here is one of my most vivid memories. I was invited to give a talk on Medjugorje to 2000 people at a European city. When I arrived, I saw that their faces were serious and sad. I was afraid of being put off right from the start, and I said to myself: “If they don't laugh at my little funny stories, it's going to be very dry”. Then I had the idea of calling the Angels of Bethlehem to my rescue, because they matched my needs in every way: their numbers, their joy and the fact that they were bearers of good news. I said to them: “You see my embarrassment, so please fill this entire place and stand by each person. Remove any heaviness! Let the joy overflow, let the atmos-



Sister Emmanuel

phere be light, cheerful, and let the message go straight to their hearts!”

So I went for it...I was surprised to see a sudden cheerfulness lighting up everyone's faces! How encouraging! But I was even more surprised when they started laughing without me saying anything particularly funny. A few minutes later, their laughter increased so much, the joy burst out with such intensity that I was forced to slip a secret word to my troop of angels:

“Dear angels, OK, you have sown incredible joy, thank you! But, if they keep laughing like that, how will I be able to keep talking? Could you turn the volume down a little bit, please, so I can still deliver the message to them?”

It was a memorable evening, as the Angels once again dazzled me with their power and concern. What a wonderful key Heaven has given us here! If you're feeling burdened, call on the Angels of Bethlehem! They sweep away all sadness and do so with a delightful sense of humor; don't leave them jobless, live the Day of Joy to the full!

Will Mary empty Purgatory?

In the early 80s, Our Lady revealed that on Christmas day, she goes to Purgatory to free many souls and open the Gates of Heaven for them. It is during that Day of Joy that she frees the most souls, even more than on All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. Let's take advantage of this providential grace to entrust many souls to her!



But be careful! Let us entrust to her those we love and who loved us, and also those who may have hurt us while they were alive! This post-mortem forgiveness may be difficult in the moment, but it will bring floods of mercy to us and to those persons, because on the other side of this life, evil has no place: only divine love prevails.

Fabio has come a long way!

For 14 years, this young man was involved in drug trafficking, crime and prostitution, not to mention other addictions.

We were in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and our friend Father Enrico was celebrating holy mass outdoors in a favela located in one of the city's most dangerous suburbs. As Fabio walked by, he heard words he had never heard before. That was Father Enrico, full of the Spirit of the Lord, who forcefully declared this before this gang:

(Diary of Sr Emmanuel continued on page 6)

The Times of London Article on Medjugorje

by Dominic Hauschild from *thetimes.com*

In June 1981 a handsome but painfully shy teenager with shaggy black hair is walking with a friend through an apple orchard. The sun is low and crickets chirp loudly as a warm afternoon breeze ripples through the leaves. The boy's name is Ivan Dragicevic. He is 16, an ethnic Croat and a Catholic, like most of his village — the remote Bosnian farming community of Medjugorje — but not particularly religious. There is little on his mind beyond football and girls. His feet kick up a fine red dust that stains the hems of his trousers. From the hills Ivan sees someone sprinting towards him. Her name is Vicka Ivankovic, and what she is about to tell him will change their lives — and those of millions of people around the world.

"Ivan, the Madonna," says Vicka, 17, breathlessly. "They said that the Madonna has appeared up there. Let's go, you and me." Vicka leads Ivan up a hill called Podbrdo, south of the village. There, the pair see a white flash of light in the shape of an angelic figure. Vicka looks at Ivan, but he has already turned on his heel and fled.

"The first day she appeared we ran off," says Ivan, now 59 years old, lounging on a cream leather sofa in his home in Medjugorje, about 90 miles southwest of the capital, Sarajevo. His black mop has long since receded and turned grey. He wears wire-framed spectacles and a tight white T-shirt emblazoned with the logo of the Boston Celtics basketball team.

"I arrived at home and thought, isn't that impossible? Can it be that I can see such a thing? But on the second day, when we came back, I started to talk with the figure. We went back again and, being with her every day, I relaxed more and more," he says. Ivan and Vicka are two of six people from Medjugorje, all now in their fifties, who claim that for the past four decades they have had frequent visions of — and conversations with — Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. "Every meeting with Our Lady I listen," Ivan says. "But I don't just listen, I also talk to her every day." Mary gives the visionaries, as they are known, messages to pass on to the world. Over the past four decades more than 40,000 such messages have been received, written down and relayed to millions of Catholics worldwide in books and via broadcasts on the internet. "**The most important thing is to pray,**" reads one, given to Ivan in September 1981. Another: "**Peace, peace, peace. Only peace.**"

Within days of those first visions thousands of pilgrims flocked to Medjugorje, increasing as its fame grew. By 2015 an estimated 30 million people had been to the village and annual visitor numbers had surpassed a million. Today Medjugorje (permanent population: 4,000) is on its way to rivalling the better-known Marian shrines of Lourdes in France and Fatima in Portugal. Recent estimates put its annual tourist numbers close to three million — still a little under half the numbers received by Lourdes and Fatima. This August alone, priests at Medjugorje handed out 325,000 communion wafers.

The Vatican has commissioned multiple investigations into the nature of the visions, including one in 2010 initiated by

Pope Benedict and headed up by a former vicar general of Rome, Cardinal Camillo Ruini. After four years the Ruini Commission signaled its approval that the first seven apparitions of Mary at Medjugorje could be considered as genuine "supernatural" events — but serious doubts lingered over the enduring visions. Benedict's successor, Pope Francis, lifted the ban on official pilgrimages in 2017, saying it was undeniable that people were having meaningful religious experiences in Medjugorje. He remained "suspicious" of the apparitions, however. The Pope, who has never visited Medjugorje, once warned worshippers: "The Virgin Mary is not a postmistress who sends messages every day."

When I visited this summer the village and its faithful awaited a full, detailed Vatican report, which wasn't to emerge until September, some months later. The events of June 1981 were not in isolation. Two months later, on August 6, witnesses claimed they saw the word *MIR*, the Bosnian-Croat word for peace, written in the sky in burning letters. At the same time the so-called Miracle of the Sun was observed, a spectacle first seen in Fatima in 1917, in which the sun appears to zigzag in the sky for minutes at a time. It was attested to by about 150 witnesses, though sceptics ascribe it to a mass hallucination or an optical illusion. It has allegedly been seen in Medjugorje many times since.

Numerous other miracles have been claimed in Medjugorje over the years. Since 2001 a bronze statue of the Risen Christ by Andrej Ajdic, a Slovenian sculptor, placed behind St James's Church in 1998, has been "weeping" from its thigh. The liquid is wiped away by worshippers on scraps of cloth that are then treated like relics. And, as at Lourdes, where Mary appeared to Saint Bernadette in the mid-19th century, numerous healings have been reported in Medjugorje — something the Vatican has also been looking into.

David Parkes, 74, is a singer and former Irish professional footballer who captained both Shamrock Rovers and Waterford. At a modest hotel resort a short drive outside the main village of Medjugorje, Parkes reminisced about playing against the legendary Brazilian forward Pelé, or with the British great Bobby Charlton. Raised Catholic, he lost his faith in God after his son Kenneth was born severely ill with cystic fibrosis. Kenneth died last year. Parkes's football career was cut short after he contracted Crohn's disease in 1977.

"I lost half my body weight to sweating, diarrhea and vomiting," he says. "I had ten major surgeries. My last surgery was on January 7, 1989, and the doctors gave me just two weeks to live." Unable to play football, he turned to his other passion, singing. The year of his last surgery, his band held a benefit concert to help his wife, Anne, pay for his funeral costs. While there he was given two free tickets to Medjugorje. "I went kicking and screaming," he says. "I thought they were all religious maniacs."

In Medjugorje he was strong-armed by Anne to a service led by an American priest, Peter Mary Rookey, who was believed



Ivan Dragicevic today



Ivan, Marija and Jakob in the early days

Healing of Soldier at Lourdes Declared Miraculous

by Madalaine Elhabel & Nicolas de Cardenas from ncregister.com and catholicnewsagency.com

The healing of a British World War I soldier at the Marian shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France has been proclaimed as the 71st miracle attributed to the pilgrimage site. Jack Traynor was born in Liverpool, England in 1883. Though his Irish mother passed away when he was young, Traynor's testimony states that "her devotion to Mass and holy Communion and her trust in the Blessed Mother stayed with him as a memory and fruitful example." Traynor described his mother as a "daily Communicant when few people were."

A member of the Royal Navy Reserve, Traynor was mobilized at the outset of the war in 1914. During the battle at Antwerp, he was hit in the head by shrapnel while attempting to carry an officer off the field. He quickly recovered and returned to service. On April 25, 1915, Traynor took part in an amphibious landing on the shores of Gallipoli as a part of an unsuccessful attempt by British and French troops to capture the peninsula in the Ottoman-occupied Turkey. Traynor was one of the few soldiers to reach the shore during that first day, having prevailed through the onslaught of machine-gun fire by the Turkish forces who were poised atop the steep banks of the beach. For over a week, Traynor remained unscathed as he attempted to lead the small coalition that survived the landing up the sandhill. However, on May 8, Traynor caught a spray of machine gun bullets to the head, chest, and arm during a bayonet charge. The wounds he sustained from the battle left him paralyzed in his right arm and regularly susceptible to epileptic attacks. Doctors attempted numerous surgeries to repair the damaged nerves in his arm and to treat the head wounds believed to have been the source of his epilepsy, but to no avail. Eight years after the battle that left him "completely and incurably incapacitated," Traynor was slated to be admitted to a hospital for incurables. Instead he went to Lourdes.

Against the pleas of his wife, doctors, and several priests, Traynor insisted upon joining a parish-led pilgrimage to Lourdes from Liverpool from July 22–27, 1923. When he heard that a pilgrimage was being organized to the shrine, he decided to do everything he could to go. He used money set aside "for some special emergency" and they even sold belongings. "My wife even pawned her own jewelry."

The experience of the trip was "very hard," confessed Traynor, who felt very ill on the way. So much so that they tried to get him off the train three times to take him to a hospital in France, but at the places where they stopped there was no hospital. On arrival, Traynor felt "desperately ill," to the point that "a woman took it upon herself to write to my wife telling her that there was no hope for me and that I would be buried at Lourdes." Despite this, "I managed to get lowered into the baths nine times in the water from the spring in the grotto and they took me to the different devotions that the sick could join in." On the second day, he suffered a strong epileptic seizure. The volunteers refused to put him in the pools in that state, but his insistence could not be overcome. "Since then I have not had another epileptic seizure," he recalled.

On Wednesday, July 25, "he seemed to be as bad as ever" and, thinking about the return trip planned for Friday, July 27, he bought some religious souvenirs for his wife and children with the last shillings he had left.

He returned to the baths. "When I was in the bath, my paralyzed legs shook violently," he related, causing alarm among the volunteers who attended to the pilgrims at the shrine, believing it was another epileptic seizure. "I struggled to stand up, feeling that I could do so easily," he explained. He was again placed in his wheelchair and taken to the procession of the Blessed Sacrament. The archbishop of Reims, Cardinal Louis Henri Joseph Luçon, carried the monstrance. "He blessed the two who were in front of me, came up to me, made the sign of the cross with the monstrance, and moved on to the next one. He just passed when I realized that a great change had taken place in me. My right arm, which had been dead since 1915, shook violently. I tore off its bandages and crossed myself, for the first time in years," Traynor testified.

That night, he could hardly sleep. As there was already a certain commotion around him, several volunteers stood guard at his door. Early in the morning, it seemed that he would fall asleep again, but "with a last breath, I opened my eyes and jumped out of bed. First I knelt on the floor to finish the rosary I had been praying, then I ran to the door." Making his way, he arrived barefoot and in his pajamas at the grotto of Massabielle, where the volunteers followed him: "When they reached the grotto, I was on my knees, still in my nightclothes, praying to the Virgin and thanking her. I only knew that I had to thank her and that the grotto was the right place to do so." He prayed for 20 minutes. When he got up, a crowd surrounded him, and they made way to let him return to the hospital.

"At the end of the Rosary Square stands the statue of Our Lady Crowned. My mother had always taught me that when you ask the Virgin for a favor or want to show her some special veneration, you have to make a sacrifice. I had no money to offer, having spent my last shillings on rosaries and medals for my wife and children, but kneeling there before the Virgin, I made the only sacrifice I could think of. I decided to give up smoking," Traynor explained with tremendous simplicity.

A priest, Father Gray, who knew nothing of his cure, asked for someone to serve Mass for him, which Traynor did: "I didn't think it strange that I could do it, after eight years of not being able to get up or walk," he said. Later, Traynor received word that the priest who had strongly opposed his joining the pilgrimage wanted to see him at his hotel. He asked him if he was well. "I told him I was well and that I hoped he was too. He burst into tears."

Early on Friday, July 27, the doctors examined Traynor again. They found that he was able to walk perfectly, that his right arm and legs had fully recovered. The opening in his skull resulting from the operation had been considerably reduced, and he had not suffered any further epileptic seizures. His sores had also healed by the time he returned from the grotto. Halfway through the train journey home, the archbishop came to see him in his passenger car. "I knelt down for his blessing. He raised me up saying, 'Jack, I think I should have your blessing.' I didn't understand why he was saying that. Looking at me, he said, 'Jack, do you realize how ill you have been and that you have been miraculously cured by the Blessed Virgin?' Then, it all came back to me, the memory of my years of illness and the sufferings on the trip to Lourdes and how ill I had been. I began to cry, and so did the archbishop, and we both sat there crying like two children. After talking to him I calmed down. I now fully understood what had happened..."



Jack Traynor recovered miraculously in Lourdes

(Sister Emmanuel continued from page 3)

"I don't know what your current situation is, but I do know that the Lord is knocking on the door of your heart! If you open it to Him, He will come in and sit at the table with you; He is inviting you to rest on His Heart in order to heal your wounds!"



That day Fabio decided to open his heart to Jesus... A few months later, as Christmas approached, he wrote a beautiful letter to the Infant Jesus. Today, in this time of grace and expectation, I would like to share with you these lines from a heart that has escaped the hellish spheres of this world, to help you sing with us the extraordinary goodness of our Savior:

From Fabio, the ex-murderer, to the Infant Jesus:

"Thank you, Jesus, for I have been born again. I don't celebrate your birthday superficially, but with a great joy that comes from the depths of my heart, in a very different way! Not drunk on wine, but on the oil of your anointing. Not snorting cocaine, but breathing in the pleasant fragrance of your Presence. Not armed with a gun, but with the sword of truth, your Word which is Spirit and Life. Not stealing, but giving love to my neighbor. Not killing, but winning souls for God. Not locked up in a brothel, but enjoying the true joy that only you, Jesus, can give my heart. Not locked up in prison, but enveloped in your infinite Love..."

That is why I want to live this day as if it were the last day of my life.

On this special day of your birthday, Infant Jesus, the only gift I can bring you is happiness, the happiness of your Presence! Thank you, Jesus! You were born for me so that one day I could be reborn in You!"

Today, Fabio is married and the father of a beautiful little girl, and he is evangelizing together with Father Enrico at the



Alliance de la Miséricorde (Mercy Alliance)!

(London Times article continued from page 4)



David Parkes, former footballer healed at Medjugorje

to possess the gift of healing through prayer. "When Father Rookey started to bless people, they were all falling to the ground. I thought it was mass hysteria — once one does it, they're all going to do it," Parkes recalls. Then Rookey handed Parkes a crucifix and began to pray over him. "Next thing I remember I'm lying on my back on the ground. When I got up I had a heat that went from the top of my head to the tips of my toes. From that point onward," Parkes

snaps his fingers, "there was no vomiting, no aches, no pains. I spent a week in hospital for them to carry out the tests, and I was home for ten days when I got the phone call to say there was no sign of Crohn's disease anywhere in my body." Parkes became a convert to the Medjugorje phenomenon. He now works as an organizer and entertainer for the religious tour group *Marian Pilgrimages*. What does he make of Pope Francis's skepticism over the apparitions? "He's not been here, as far as I'm concerned," he says.

This June marked the 43rd anniversary of the first apparitions. During nine days of prayer — called a novena — I and several thousand other people join Ivan and his fellow seer Marija in a clearing on Apparition Hill. They both look remarkably ordinary, dressed in T-shirts. Maria's is powder blue, Ivan's is black with white Adidas stripes on the sleeve.

On the final evening at 11.30pm, by candlelight, they drop to their knees — a sign that a vision is taking place. They clasp their hands in front of their chests and lift their gaze to the sky, while their lips move in conversation with an invisible interlocutor. Afterwards Marija grasps a microphone and relays the message. Mary "smiled and was joyful", she says. "She thanked us for our prayers and sacrifices and told us to continue. She came dressed in a gold dress, standing on a cloud and wearing a crown of stars." Mary then prayed over the crowd "in her mother language, Aramaic" before leaving for Heaven.

Ivan has given interviews like this one only a handful of times and, although it is impossible to know the truth of his visions, I am taken by his earnest demeanor. That isn't to say he hasn't benefited considerably from the apparitions. In 1995 a Hollywood film was released about Medjugorje, starring the *West Wing* actor Martin Sheen as Jozo Zovko. The year before, Ivan married Laureen Murphy, a former winner of the Miss Massachusetts beauty pageant, with whom he has four children. The couple spend six months of every year in Boston, and reside the other six months in the Medjugorje home in which we now sit.

He and the other visionaries don't have separate full-time jobs, so he rents out his house to pilgrims to make money. It is spacious, air conditioned and the tile floor is cool underfoot. Through the window is a large garden and a neatly paved pathway leading to Ivan's private chapel, from which he broadcasts his evening visions to dozens of followers — a private prayer group held over Zoom.

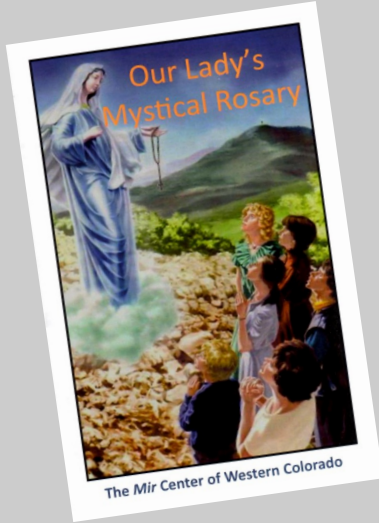
Ivan tells me he has always struggled with the attention. "Those first days were difficult. We were just children and I was a very introverted child," he says. Though not particularly religious before the events on the hillside, that year he entered a seminary in Dubrovnik and sought to become a priest. But his teachers and peers refused to believe in his visions.

(London Times article continued on page 7)

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(London Times article continued from page 6)

"I suffered very much, truly, very much," he says. "I often asked myself, 'Why me? Will I ever be able to do what Our Lady wants me to do?' I once asked Our Lady and she just smiled and said, '**My dear child, I don't always look for the best.**' I never asked that question again."

After two years he left the seminary, deciding against priesthood. A rumor began that Mary gave him a vision of his own future. He supposedly said that she "revealed my future to me until my death". Today he downplays those claims. "Many books write this, but they never asked me what is the truth. Our Lady never showed me the future," he says. "But she told me certain things. Indications and directions of how I should walk. What kind of a life would it be if you knew everything in advance? Awful. It wouldn't be a life."

In addition to her public messages, the visionaries say Mary has revealed to them a number of "secrets" concerning the future of the world. These are said to involve signs, warnings and "chastisements" and have been interpreted by some as heralding an apocalypse. One secret, the third, is said to involve a visible, indestructible, permanent sign that is "not of this world", which will be left on Apparition Hill.

In previous interviews the visionaries have said there are ten secrets, and once they receive all of them the daily visions will cease and Mary will appear to them only once a year. Ivan, who says he has received nine secrets so far, corrects the record. "There are not ten secrets," he tells me. "We all have ten. Some of them we share in common and others we don't. There are not sixty secrets. That would be a lot, but there are more than ten." He declines to elaborate on the content of his secrets, but waxes lyrical about the loveliness of the messenger. "It is impossible to describe in words the very beauty of her," Ivan says, sitting in his front room with a tray of stale croissants on a table. "She wears a grey dress, a white veil and has blue eyes. She has pink lips and pink cheeks, with black hair. She stands on a cloud and wears a crown of stars."

Despite its reservations and equivocations, the Vatican finally decided to stamp a seal of approval — of sorts — on Ivan and the five other visionaries in September. At a press conference in Rome, the bald-headed Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernandez declared that, after its thorough 15-year investigation, he was to deliver a verdict of *nihil obstat* on Medjugorje, a Latin phrase that means "nothing stands in the way", currently the highest level of formal attainable approval. Fernandez, originally from Argentina, is the head of the Congregation for the Dicastery of the Faith, the Vatican department in charge of religious discipline in the church. "While this does not imply a declaration of the supernatural character of the phenomenon in question," he said, "and recalling that the faithful are not obliged to believe in it, the *nihil obstat* indicates that the faithful can receive a positive encouragement for their Christian life through this spiritual proposal and it authorizes public acts of devotion."

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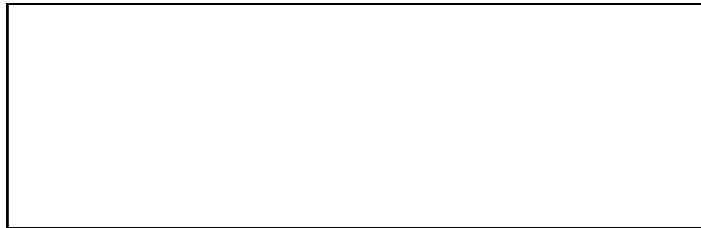
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January

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|--------------------------------------|----|--|-------------------------------------|----|----|----|
| | | Medjugorje prayer group 7:00pm St Francis | 1 Mary, the Mother of God | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 The Epiphany Of the Lord | 6 | 7 Medjugorje prayer group 7:00pm St Francis | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 The Baptism of the Lord | 13 | 14 Medjugorje prayer group 7:00pm St Francis | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 Medjugorje prayer group 7:00pm St Francis | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 Medjugorje Prayer group 7:00pm St Francis | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

Upcoming events:

- + **Mary, the Mother of God, January 1st**
- + **The Epiphany of the Lord, January 5th**
- + **The Baptism of the Lord, January 12th**



Our Lady's Five-Point Program
 *Conversion
 *Prayer
 *Fasting
 *Peace
 *Reconciliation

The Mir Center of Western Colorado
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If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please let us know...

Our primary goal, our main focus, is to bring Jesus Christ to the world and to bring the world to Jesus Christ. To accomplish this task, the MIR Center of Western Colorado was established to provide accurate information about the messages and events originating from Marian apparitions occurring in Medjugorje and elsewhere. We are committed to living and sharing the messages of Medjugorje and helping others to live the messages as well. By living the messages of Medjugorje, which are in essence the message of the Gospel, we hope to spread peace into our families, into our communities, and into our world. As a nonprofit organization, we intend to use any and all funds raised or donations received to aid in spreading the messages of Our Lady to all who will listen. With regard to the apparitions occurring in the world today we humbly submit to the final authority of the Catholic Church.

MISSION STATEMENT