

On a Mountain, In a Grotto, On Another Mountain, In a Field? But Not in a Church?

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Many are waiting to base their decision to believe in Medjugorje on Church approval. However, many more are not waiting.

People across the world look to A Friend of Medjugorje , the founder of Caritas of Birmingham, who is a first-hand eyewitness to the events of Medjugorje for more than 30 years. His singular understanding that, "It is better for the

stands in stark contrast from the majority who believe Medjugorje will be protected, will be accepted by a vastly greater amount of people once it is under the formal structure and approval of the Catholic Church. The founder of Caritas has seen clearly through God's intervention in Medjugorje, through the messages, and through personal cognition gained through living Our Lady's messages, that it is not God's will for Medjugorje to be approved by the Catholic Church at this time, and thus receive the label, "Catholic." He is undeterred in his belief that these apparitions are real, are for the conversion of the world, and are to be acted upon now. For those waiting for approval and to those purposely hindering Medjugorje, there is reason to seriously examine your position

or judgment, especially if made without deep thought, consideration and prayer.

The founder of Caritas, A Friend of Medjugorje, stated clearly:

?With the reality that Medjugorje has spread throughout the world and has led to millions of conversions, the tables have turned and the greater burden lies upon those who wish to disprove the apparitions, rather than upon those who believe, to prove that they are real.?
1

Advisor to Pope John Paul II and renowned Mariologist, Father René Laurentin, affirms the apparitions of Medjugorje are to be acted upon now:

**??at Medjugorje the Virgin is calling
people to believe without waiting for
tomorrow; tomorrow will be too late??**
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**Our Lady of Medjugorje is calling Her
apostles to actively live Her messages
today, and the Catholic Church has given
approval to the faithful to pilgrimage to
Medjugorje and to spread the messages, as
long as the apparitions are not taken for
granted. At the same time, there are
contradicting powers actively censoring
Medjugorje in parishes, even stopping the
visionaries from speaking, misinterpreting
Vatican statements in order to confuse and
hinder belief.**

Archbishop Frane Frani?, of former Yugoslavia, firmly believed in the apparitions of Medjugorje and understood the gravity of the plan. He said:

??those who have hindered a greater response to Our Lady, Queen of Peace in Medjugorje carry a great responsibility??₃

On August 21, 1996, a press release by Vatican spokesman, Dr. Joaquín Navarro-Valls, was issued to stop the misinterpretation of the April 10, 1991, Yugoslavian Conference of Bishop?s statement. Navarro-Valls said:

**?You cannot tell people not to go there
(Medjugorje) without proof that the
apparitions are false. So far there is none
(proof), thus anyone can go there if they so
wish.?
4**

**Great is the responsibility on those who
hinder others from acting on the messages
of Medjugorje. While the Church waits,
science has proven the visionaries are
seeing something supernatural. With 25
years of scientific testing, performed by
over 56 scientists from more than 5
different countries, A Friend of
Medjugorje writes:**

?Never in the history of the Church has

any group of individuals been so studied and scrutinized by so many different kinds of experts and people from around the world, with the variety and complexity of the technological equipment that science offers today, for so long a period of time, as these six Medjugorje visionaries: Mirjana, Ivanka, Vicka, Marija, Ivan and Jakov. That fact in itself should give pause to even the most convinced atheist.?

Dr. Henri Joyeux, a Professor of Cancerology and surgeon at Montpellier's Cancer Institute in France, made frequent trips to Medjugorje in 1984 as head of a team of five doctors. At that time he concluded:

**??the phenomenon?is scientifically
inexplicable??**
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**In 2005, two thousand and five, Professor
Joyeux was asked to return and compare
current results to the conclusions of 20
years ago in 1984. His conclusion was
profound:**

**?After twenty years [from the original
results in 1984], our conclusion has not
changed. We were not wrong. Our
scientific conclusion is clear: the
Medjugorje events must be taken
seriously.?**
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So, why are some waiting for approval before they believe? Fr. Laurentin understood in 1984 the paradox of the theological ?approval? process surrounding the Medjugorje apparitions. He says:

?If Lourdes were to take place in our own day, the apparitions [to St. Bernadette] would not be recognized [approved by the Church?]?₇

He goes on to say:

??there would be enormous objections raised?in order to explain the apparitions

as a purely natural phenomenon that has nothing to do with God. I have seen this done. Given the prevalent deterministic atmosphere [in the Church], God seems forbidden to perform any miracles at all.?
8

On the sixth day of the Medjugorje apparitions, June 30, 1981, two Communist social workers took the six visionaries ?sight seeing,? in order to keep them off the mountain where Our Lady had been appearing, in order to stop the apparitions. The visionaries were assured they would be brought back to the mountain in time for the daily apparition. Although the Communists succeeded in keeping the visionaries from the mountain, Our Lady was not hindered, even though the

visionaries were not at the same place. She came on time, appearing to the visionaries where they were. Mirjana asked Our Lady during the apparition if She was upset because they were not on Apparition Mountain. Our Lady gave an interesting response saying:

?That doesn't matter.?

Unsure of Her plan and wanting to protect the apparitions and themselves from persecution, Mirjana then asked Our Lady if She would be upset if they did not return to Apparition Mountain, but if the apparitions could be moved into St. James Church, the church in the village of

Medjugorje. Describing Our Lady's

response, Mirjana said, *"Our Lady seemed hesitant, but then She agreed to appear in the church and added:*

"Always at the same time...?"

Time and timing are measurable by science and offer proof of Our Lady's wisdom and the visionaries' truthfulness, confirming the visionaries are seeing something supernatural. Additionally, giving credence to the 20 years of consistent scientific conclusions regarding Medjugorje, is the 136-year history₉ of psychology, with its past studies, advances and technological refinement, of which

nothing like Medjugorje has ever occurred.

Dr. Bartulica, a Croatian psychologist was one of the first to examine the visionaries in October 1981, and conducted additional tests from there. In 2007 he presented his conclusions particularly noting the timing of the six:

??there is no such case in the history of psychiatry that six children start simultaneously [always at the same time] hallucinating₁₀ at 6:40 p.m. (every evening)!?₁₁

The founder of Caritas, praying to understand the significance of the June 30, 1981, apparition questioned further: Why

was Our Lady hesitant to move the apparitions into St. James Church?

Both Medjugorje visionaries Marija and Mirjana testified personally to the founder of Caritas that, *“Our Lady has a great spirit of decision.”*¹² Mirjana further confirms the consistency of Our Lady’s character to be decisive of Her character in several of her second of the month apparitions:

**“Our Lady was very decided today.”
January 2, 2012**

**“Our Lady was decisive...”
November 2,
2012**

??Our Lady was determined or decisive.?

June 2, 2014

The founder of Caritas has repeatedly understood the messages of Our Lady of Medjugorje bring the Bible to life for modern man, which is necessary, because modernity has led man away from the Truths contained in Scripture. God never changes. Jesus called and formed His apostles outside of the Temple, though all were faithful Jews. Jesus and the apostles met among the people in the activity of their daily life which happened in homes, on mountains, in the fields, on the streets, returning to worship in the Temple. Knowing Scripture gives further light and reason behind Our Lady's reluctance to

**move into the Church. In Scripture, the
new Church began among the people. Our
Lady said on August 29, 1982:**

**??I am the Mother who has come from the
people??**

**The Mother who comes from the people,
comes among the people June 24, 1981,
decidedly choosing to appear on the
mountains surrounding Medjugorje, not in
the Church of St. James. On July 4, 1982,
Our Lady requested that Marija, Ivan and
other young people form a prayer group
gathering twice a week on Apparition
Mountain to encounter God in nature. The
beautiful sunset evenings, filled with**

singing and praying, viewed from Apparition Mountain are especially striking for those living their daily lives in concrete cities, now so unbiblical. To this day, many families gather together on the mountain, crossing generations, spending hours in prayer before Our Lady's arrival, as is shown in the following description.

August 11, 2014

Pilgrims started arriving at the Blue Cross before 6:00 p.m. and continued to arrive up until apparition time. Small groups of pilgrims of different languages found quiet spots nearby and prayed and sang in their own language until the prayer group began

singing around 8:30 p.m. There was singing for the next hour, until 9:30 p.m. when Ivan announced that we would be praying the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary in preparation for Our Lady coming. Our Lady appeared to Ivan at a little after 10:00 p.m. and the apparition lasted around 8 minutes?

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Our Lady is using this single prayer group to teach those from around the world how to return to their homes and start their own prayer groups in their own families and communities.

On the mountain, Our Lady is free of structured restrictions and free to set the

schedule. Pilgrims gather early, filling the mountain with prayer, often staying for a time after Our Lady has left, singing and praying. The desire for and length of prayer by pilgrims who come to the mountain is a sign of the great need for prayer that people around the world are feeling in their hearts.

August 8, 1994

Ivan, Blue Cross, 10:00 p.m., ?Tonight the people prayed the full fifteen decades of the Rosary instead of the usual singing and one mystery. Our Lady appeared happy and joyful?..?

Not only is Our Lady very joyful on the mountains, but the length of the apparitions is itself a message. A sampling follows:

? June 23, 2002 ? Ivan, Apparition

Mountain, the apparition lasted 15 minutes

? June 12, 2009 - Ivan, Apparition

Mountain, 10:00 p.m., the apparition lasted 11 minutes

? June 24, 2011 - Ivan, Apparition

Mountain, 11:00 p.m., the apparition lasted 13 minutes

? June 21, 2014 ? Ivan, Apparition

**Mountain, 9:00 p.m., the apparition lasted
14 minutes**
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**Through all the years of the apparitions in
Medjugorje, Our Lady has always been the
happiest on the mountains where She is
freely accessible to great numbers.**

**On June 29, 1981, the fifth day of Our
Lady's apparitions, the visionaries asked
Our Lady if She was happy to see so many
people present [on Apparition Mountain].
Our Lady replied:**

"More than happy."

August 14, 1989 ? Ivan, Apparition

Mountain, Our Lady said:

**??Tonight your mother is happy, happy,
happy to be with you and to see you in such
large numbers??**

August 5, 1991 ? Ivan, Apparition

Mountain, Our Lady said,

**??I am very happy tonight to see you in
such large numbers??**

July 9, 2007 ? Ivan, at the Blue Cross said,

??[Our Lady] was very, very happy??

**Several thousand pilgrims and villagers
were present.**



Thousands of people anticipate being in the presence of Our Lady on the mountain. It is an effort to climb the mountain, many of them heading there through the fields or by the roads hours before the prayer group begins. Almost every available space is taken up by people in and around Our Lady's statue and continues much further back. It is a beautiful scene in which one can imagine Our Lady coming down from

Heaven, often accompanied by angels.

? January 7, 1991 ? Ivan, Apparition

**Mountain, 10:00 p.m., 3 angels appeared
with Our Lady**

? June 24, 1997 ? Ivan, Apparition

**Mountain, 3 angels appeared with Our
Lady**

? August 21, 2006 ? Ivan, at the Blue Cross,

3 angels appeared with Our Lady

? January 1, 2010 ? Marija, Apparition

**Mountain, 10:47 p.m. ??a myriad of
angels??**

appeared with Our Lady

? June 17, 2013- Ivan, Apparition

Mountain, 10:00 p.m., 3 angels appeared

with Our Lady
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A witness to the manifold conversions of pilgrims in Medjugorje that happen while climbing the mountains and walking through the fields, A Friend of Medjugorje saw that God Himself was intervening to define Medjugorje and its place outside of a church building: *?It is better for the apparitions to remain outside of the Church.?*

A Friend of Medjugorje talked and met with Bishop Pavao ?ani?, (the bishop over Medjugorje at this time, 1987), on several occasions. Though Bishop ?ani? was opposed to the Medjugorje apparitions, A Friend of Medjugorje found him engaging, likeable, and sincere in his beliefs. At the end of his meeting with Bishop ?ani? in October 1987, A Friend of Medjugorje asked Bishop ?ani? if he believed he was serving God?s purpose for the plan He has in Medjugorje. Bishop ?ani?, with sincerity, replied to A Friend of Medjugorje:

??this is God?s will what I am doing.?

This interview with Bishop ?ani? planted seeds in the heart of A Friend of Medjugorje that evolved into the following understanding of how Bishop ?ani? was doing the will of God because through his actions he was actually protecting Medjguorje and the apparitions:

?Through Bishop ?ani?, God took the apparitions out of the Church a few years after the visionaries started having them there. The Franciscans then moved the apparitions into the parish house, which was still on church grounds. A few years after that, God, again through the bishop, drove the apparitions out of the parish house. The visionaries were told if they go into the choir loft and Our Lady appears

**there, as parishioners they could pray
where they like. The bishop, again
decreeing the will of God that the visions
should not be in the Church, said that they
were not allowed in the choir loft...The
apparitions then returned, as they were in
the beginning days?to the homes of the
visionaries and, yes, back on the mountain
where Our Lady wanted to be in the first
place**

**, and where She was when she answered
hesitantly when asked by Mirjana to
appear in the church. On the mountain,
Our Lady is free of restrictions and free to
speak, and free from the contamination
that plagues the church today.?**

A Friend of Medjugorje outlines the above

as follows:

? June 24, 1981: Our Lady chose to appear outside the village and the church on Apparition Mountain.

? June 30, 1981: Mirjana requests the apparitions move inside the Church of St. James for protection. Our Lady submits to her request, though She appeared ?hesitant? when asked about moving into the Church.

? 1981 - 2005: With 25 years of testing, it is science that validates the visionaries are seeing something supernatural.

**? 1985 - 1990: Bishop ?ani? does the will of
God and orders the apparitions:**

- **Out of the church**
-
- **Out of the parish house**
-
- **Out of the church choir loft**
-
- **Out of the church bell tower**

**As Medjugorje is in virtually every diocese
across the world, God can still be seen
intervening through church hierarchy to
navigate the place of the apparitions of
Medjugorje out of churches. This is not
because Our Lady is against the Church**

. She is its Mother. Why then are the apparitions of Medjugorje not to be in churches?

In 1988, Our Lady came to Birmingham, Alabama, through visionary Marija for three months. The founder of Caritas of Birmingham intended the daily apparitions to take place in a church.

Medjugorje visionary, Marija, upon visiting the church in Birmingham felt something very strong well up inside her. She turned to the founder of Caritas and said:

?The apparitions are not supposed to take place here [in the church].?
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The founder of Caritas initially felt strongly the apparitions would be in the church, but was taken aback when Marija said this because he also felt during Mass very powerfully and very clearly something change. He felt that Our Lady did not want the apparitions to take place there in the church. He, therefore, was shocked when Marija turned to him and relayed what he himself had been thinking during Mass. Upon leaving, others who had joined them at Mass voiced the same feeling. Our Lady began to take over at that point to show where She wanted to appear. At this surprise, A Friend of Medjugorje and his

wife took Marija back to their home where Marija was staying. Upon arriving, they took Marija through the whole house to familiarize Her with the home. As apparition time was approaching, he with his wife showed Marija their bedroom. Marija, looked over the bed at a Crucifix¹⁹ on the wall and clearly, authoritatively said:

?The apparitions will take place here [in the bedroom].?²⁰

Both were not only surprised, but shocked, questioning interiorly, ?Apparitions over our bed?? That would have been the last place they would have chosen for Our Lady?s apparition. Through November,

December 1988 and January 1989, Our Lady appeared there, in the most sacred room of the family home, and gave messages almost every day.

Marija has said Our Lady taught her that every family is like a small church. It is the small church₂₁ of the home itself that Our Lady first desired to bring conversion. She indicated during the first year of the apparitions Her desire to be in homes:

Spring, 1982

?? If it is necessary, I will appear in each home??

Our Lady has a great spirit of decision.

Yet, She gave way to the visionaries?

request to go into the Church, only to

slowly lead events back out of the Church.

On November 24, 2000, Fr. Slavko, a well-known priest, died suddenly near the top of Cross Mountain. The visionaries and the entire village of Medjugorje were shaken and many were heartbroken. Visionary, Marija, spoke to the founder of Caritas that night on the phone relaying what had happened in the apparition. Marija, upset by the death of Fr. Slavko, had asked Our Lady during the apparition:

?Now what??

Her question was as if to say, *?What do we do now? What will happen now??*

Our Lady said firmly, decisively to Marija:

?Avanti.? (Italian meaning ?forward?)

?Ispred.? (Croatian meaning ?advance?)

?Go forward.? (English translation)

It is Our Lady, the resolute decision of

God, who said on March 25, 2006:

?Courage??I decided to lead you??

**A Friend of Medjugorje clarifies the
significance of these statements made by
Our Lady:**

**?To understand Our Lady?s plans, the
word ?I? is a very important word in Her
messages. We must contemplate the word
?I? to understand Who is speaking to us,
what She wants of us, and what She is
doing. Medjugorje is not led by an
individual, or a group or by priests or
bishops or the Church. Who then is in**

charge of this movement? Medjugorje is a movement guided by Our Lady through the people. ?You,? She says, ?are important.?

The Medjugorje apparitions have repeatedly been pushed out of the Church structure of St. James and other churches worldwide through the legitimate Church authority, through the will of God, consistently proving, for the propagation of Medjugorje, it is better for the apparitions to remain outside of the Church.

Our Lady?s first appearance was on Apparition Mountain and this act gives a message paralleling other apparitions:

Guadalupe (on a mountain), Lourdes (in a grotto), La Salette (on a mountain), Fatima (in a field) and many others. Why do Our Lady's apparitions always take place outside of a church building? Because Our Lady of Medjugorje has come to ?construct the Church anew,? and She must begin from the outside because the Church's weakened state would infect the purity of the plan of God. This is made very clear by A Friend of Medjugorje's inspired vision, ?Rebuilding the Church.?

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Our Lady is bringing about a revolution that we are not to just go to a church building, but we are to be the Church. A Friend of Medjugorje saw clearly Our Lady point to authority, yet:

?She [Our Lady] tells all of us to be obedient to the bishop, yet She gives us a sign that we are the Church.?

On August 25, 2014, A Friend of Medjugorje spoke of the plans of Medjugorje:

?? She [Our Lady] said, ??pray for my intentions?? Why? Because satan wants to destroy Her plan. In 2008, Our Lady continues and says, ??pray for my intentions so that, through your prayers, you may stop satan's plan over this world?? This is not about one nation or one part of a nation. This is about the whole

**Heaven speaking to us of a spiritual battle
over the whole world. This is
unprecedented.?**

**Medjugorje visionary, Mirjana, confirmed
the same:**

**?The Gospa is with us for almost 27 years
[in 2008] and not once has She said: ?Dear
Croats, dear Italians, dear Americans.?
She always says: ?Dear children.? ?
23**

**Jesus? last words to His apostles before
ascending were:**

Matthew 28:19

??make disciples of all nations??

Our Lady's words to Her apostles,

February 2, 2015:

**??Do not waste time thinking about
whether you are worthy to be my
apostles?pray that you may comprehend
that you are worthy to work for Heaven??**

Repeatedly, from the early 1990's, A

Friend of Medjugorje has stated:

**?THE MEDJUGORJE APPARITIONS
ARE NECESSARY
FOR MODERN MAN'S SALVATION,
AND
ARE THE FULFILLMENT OF
REVELATION
AND THE EXPLANATION OF
SCRIPTURE FOR MANKIND.?**

**Bishop Jose Vilorio of Venezuela states of
the apparitions of Medjugorje:**

**?...Without this supernaturality, these
events could never hold out to such an
extent and spread like this throughout the
whole world**

**?What is being announced here is the
essence of the Gospel, therefore we have to
accept it!?**
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**But will the Church accept it and at the
same time give Our Lady freedom to fulfill
Her plans according to the will and
mystery of God? Or will they be weighed
down by their own preconceived ideas of
how they think Our Lady should think,
should speak, should act, when She should
appear, how long She should appear or
even who She should choose to be Her
witnesses and Her apostles?**

**This was the error of the Jewish leaders
who had preconceived ideas of what the**

**Messiah would look like, would act like,
and would say. Jesus had to reveal the
truth of who He was outside of the
synagogue walls because He could not
penetrate the thickness of hearts of those
inside the walls.**

**Is it any different today? God has sent Our
Lady among us and is revealing in fullness,
through Medjugorje, Who She is. She is
the Mother of the whole world. And what
She was sent from Heaven to do. She was
sent to call the whole world to salvation.**

**Like Jesus, She remains outside the walls
of the Church. But this is not a problem for
Our Lady, nor for Her followers who love
Her and love the Church. There is a
purpose of being outside the Church.**

Jesus spoke a parable to His disciples:

?A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ?Come; for all is now ready.? But they all alike began to make excuses?So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, ?Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.? And the servant said, ?Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.? And the master said to the servant, ?Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those

banquet.? Luke 14:16, 20-24

By Her words and Her witness, Our Lady has been teaching Her followers, Her apostles, to set out with Her to find the lost and the forsaken, the unbelievers, the wounded and diseased souls, *?in the streets and lanes of the city?down the highways and hedges,?* and invite them to come to Her, and She will lead them into the Banquet of Her Son, *?that my house may be filled.?* Medjugorje is the renewal of the Church--from the outside in. [Read ?Rebuilding the Church.?](#)

Endnotes:

1. The writings of A Friend of Medjugorje are producing hundreds of thousands of conversions, if not millions, through grace, and are requested worldwide from every corner of the earth. The author, therefore, will not take credit for a work that, by proof of the impact of these writings, have led hearts to conversion. Our Lady gave him a direct message to witness not with words, but through humility. It is for this reason that he wishes to remain simply, ?A Friend of Medjugorje.?

2. Is the Virgin Mary Appearing at Medjugorje?, by Fr. Rene Laurentin, 1984, p.2

3. Publication ?Nasa Ognjista,? XXV, 1995, pp.4, 9.

**4. "You Cannot Spread Medjugorje?" by
A Friend of Medjugorje, November 2013.**

**5. Interview with Dr. Joyeux printed in the
publication "Paris Match," Summer 1985,
reprinted in MIREcorder, Peter Batty,
1986, 4-6; Can also be read on
Mej.com/Scientific studies.**

**6. "Medjugorje Tribune," January 2007,
No. 1; Also on Mej.com/Scientific Studies,
"Specific Tests Administered to the
Medjugorje Visionaries and Their Results."**

**7. Is the Virgin Mary Appearing at
Medjugorje?, by Fr. Rene Laurentin, 1984,
p.7.**

8. Ibid.

9. German professor, physician, and

philosopher, Wilhelm Wundt opened the first psychology lab in 1879 and is credited as the father of modern psychology.

10. Twenty years of scientific tests conclude without a doubt the visionaries see something supernatural and are not hallucinating. Mej.com/Scientific Studies.

11. ?Medjugorje Tribune,? January 2007, No. 1. Also available on mej.com/Scientific Studies, ?Psychological Testing.?

12. In personal interviews in Medjugorje, 1997

13. From the article, ?Fight Against Evil,? describing Ivan?s prayer group meeting and Our Lady?s message on August 11, 2014, Mej.com

14. Words From Heaven, by A Friend of Medjugorje, 2015, 15th edition; St. James Publishing, Caritas, AL.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Bishop ?ani?, A Friend of Medjugorje, October 7, 1987 meeting, with Bishop ?ani? at the Diocesan Office in Mostar.

18. Words From Heaven, by A Friend of Medjugorje, copyright 1990-2015, 15th edition; Mej.com, ?History of the Apparitions in the Bedroom and in the Field,? November 19, 1988. See endnote for full story.

19. In 1988, the founder of Caritas of Birmingham was given this Crucifix by Fr.

Slavko, taken from his bedroom in the rectory where many apparitions took place from 1983-1987. See endnotes for full story.

20. Words From Heaven, by A Friend of Medjugorje, copyright 1990-2015, 15th edition; Mej.com, "History of the Apparitions in the Bedroom and in the Field," November 19, 1988. See endnote for full story.

21. Family Consecration Prayer, 1987, Caritas of Birmingham, Caritas, AL. See the endnotes for the full story.

22. Click here to read a detailed explanation of how, "Rebuilding the Church" will take place.

23. A Conversation With the Visionaries,

by Kresimir Sego, 2011.

24. Medjugorje Press Bulletin #131,

December 1, 1999. Print.

**Referenced Above-The Story of the
Crucifix in the Bedroom of Apparitions**

**The founder of Caritas was in Medjugorje
in October 16, 1988. While passing by the
rectory and Fr. Slavko's office, our
founder noticed Fr. Slavko was removing
everything from his shelves and packing it
all up in boxes. Fr. Slavko told him that he
was being transferred to another parish
and was moving. Our founder offered to
stay and help him. This room was actually**

the room of Our Lady's daily apparitions at the time. At the end of the afternoon, Fr. Slavko took the Crucifix off the wall. It was before this Crucifix that the visionaries knelt each evening to prepare for Our Lady's coming. Hundreds of apparitions had taken place before this Crucifix. Holding it in his hands, Fr. Slavko approached our founder and asked him to take it as a gift. Though, of course, he wanted to accept it, our founder felt it was too precious a gift to be given to him and tried to tell this to Fr. Slavko. But Fr. Slavko insisted strongly that our founder receive this gift and in the end he accepted it.

Before leaving Medjugorje, A Friend of

Medjugorje brought the Crucifix to visionary Marija. He explained to her how he received it and then asked her to say a prayer over it that Our Lady could somehow use it to help bring about the conversion of the United States. Marija took it in her hands and entered into a deep prayer. She then bent and kissed it, and she did so with such love and reverence that it deeply impacted our founder. It made him ponder more deeply this gift that had been given him.

Upon returning home from this trip, he brought the Crucifix to Annette, his wife. He wanted to pray to ask God where in their house they should hang it. Annette, not having been raised Catholic, who had

only just converted to the Catholic Church a few years earlier, did not yet understand many of the Catholic traditions. The only place she told her husband she didn't want the Crucifix to hang was above their bed in their bedroom. She knew that many Catholics kept to this tradition but being raised Protestant she wasn't used to seeing Jesus hanging on the Cross. After much prayer, they were not led in any direction as to where to hang the Crucifix. Believing that God wanted more prayer and reflection before giving an answer, our founder put the Crucifix away until the Holy Spirit gave some enlightenment. Weeks went by without thinking of it.

Around the middle of November, a close

friend of Marija's spoke to our founder telling him to immediately come to Medjugorje that Marija and her brother were ready to travel to the Birmingham for her brother, Andrija's kidney transplant. Marija was to donate one of her kidneys to her brother. A Friend of Medjugorje flew to Medjugorje, leaving Annette, in her last month of pregnancy, to prepare for Marija and Andrija coming to stay in their home. Annette learned the three of them would all be arriving home on November 18th. The night of November 17th, Annette was awakened after having a dream that was very vivid in detail. She dreamt that she was hanging the Crucifix they had received from Fr. Slavko over the bed in her bedroom. Not having thought of the Crucifix for the past several weeks, she

wondered why suddenly she was dreaming of it. She drifted back to sleep and was awakened a second time after having the very same dream. It was in the middle of the night and she tried to put the dream from her mind as she went back to sleep. A third time she dreamt the very same dream but when she woke from it this time, she had a fire in her heart unlike anything she had ever experienced, to hang the Crucifix over the bed. She said it was a burning desire and she could hardly wait until morning. She never went back to sleep. At the first light of day, she woke her young sons, went to find a hammer and nail, and altogether they hung the Crucifix in the place where she had told her husband she never wanted it to hang. And yet, hanging it now was the cause of the greatest joy.

Though she did not understand why this made her so happy, she believed with all her heart this was where Our Lady wanted it to be.

Late that night, November 18, 1988, our founder, with Marija, Andrija and two close friends arrived at the house. Our Lady had already appeared to Marija that day. In the apparition Our Lady had told Marija that the next day, November 19, the apparition would be at 10:40 a.m. in the morning?which coincided with the evening apparition time in Medjugorje. It had been previously arranged that they would attend Mass in a church in Birmingham each morning and the apparitions would take place at the church following Mass. That

was their plan. They would discover the next day, however, that Our Lady had different plans of where She wanted Her apparitions to be. This began a two-month stay for Marija. Other than their own homes, never had a visionary from Medjugorje stayed in one place for such a long time. Over time, Our Lady began to unfold a beautiful love story, establishing a way of life through Her messages.

Referenced Above-Consecration Prayer for the Family

This Prayer was first prayed by Marija in June 1987, in the presence of the married couples who were part of Caritas of Birmingham pilgrimage to Medjugorje.

The couples wanted to renew their wedding vows in Medjugorje and at the request of our founder, Marija interceded for them to Our Lord through this spontaneous prayer. When the young Croatian guide, who happened to be Muslim, translated the prayer into English, she was so moved by Marija's words and her deep spirit of prayer, that she began to weep.

Marija's words on Consecration:

I shall recommend all of you to the Blessed Virgin. I want each of you to start living a new life so that each of you will become Our Lady's witnesses and that you will take this consecration seriously. Our Lady says that every family is like small Church. You have

individual to grow spiritually. We have to grow together in our holiness and in that way we shall become united and unity is what Our Lady wants. Our Lady always says that it is very important for us to set an example by our way of living for one another and that is the way we shall show one another the way to holiness. God bless you.

*My Lord, I plead You tonight for my family.
I plead You to bless us, to take care of us
and to show us which way leads to salvation.
My God, it is Your will that every single one
of us will be changed, that our lives may
become Your life; and tonight, my God, I am
giving my family to You and I plead You,
You embrace us and lead us, because You
can do everything, You are Almighty. From
this night on, I am giving my family to You
and I plead You, give us Your blessing
tonight because we are not strong enough to
carry our burden alone, and I plead You my
Lord, set us free from other ways but Yours.
Let us be turned only towards You, towards
Your will. Let us do only what You would
like us to do. Let us always search for Your
will; and I plead You, my Lord Jesus, give
my family Your blessing tonight. Amen.*

Prayer by Marija Lunetti

Adapted for this Special Consecration

by Friend of Medjugorje
