

Seize the Moment



By A Friend of Medjugorje

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SPECIAL STATEMENT

Caritas of Birmingham is not acting on behalf of the Catholic Church or placing its mission under the church. Its mission is to reach all people of the earth. Its actions are outside of the church done privately. It is further stated:

So as not to take for granted the credibility of the Medjugorje Apparitions, it is stated that the Medjugorje apparitions are not formally approved by the Catholic Church.

Medjugorje Status

June 25, 2017 A.D.

No attempt is intended to pre-empt the Church on the validity of the Medjugorje Apparitions. They are private revelation waiting the Church's final judgment¹. In the interim, these private revelations are allowed by, and for, the faithful to have devotion to and to be spread legally by the Church. Devotion and the propagation of private revelations can be forbidden only **if** the private revelation is condemned because of anything it contains which contravenes faith and morals according to AAS 58 (1966) 1186 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Medjugorje has not been condemned nor found to have anything against faith or morals, therefore it is in the grace of the Church to be followed by the faithful. By the rite of Baptism one is commissioned and given the authority to evangelize. "*By Baptism they share in the priesthood of Christ, in his prophetic and royal mission.*"² One does not need approval to promote or to have devotions to private revelations or to spread them when in conformity to AAS 58 (1966) 1186, as the call to evangelize is given when baptized. These apparitions have not been approved formally by the Church. Caritas of Birmingham, the Community of Caritas and all associated with it, realize and accept that the final authority regarding the Queen of Peace, Medjugorje and happenings related to the apparitions, rests with the Holy See in Rome. We at Caritas, willingly submit to that judgment. While having an amiable relationship with the Diocese of Birmingham and a friendly relationship with its bishop, Caritas of Birmingham as a lay mission is not officially connected to the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama, just as is the Knights of Columbus.³ The Diocese of Birmingham's official position on Caritas is neutral and holds us as Catholics in good standing.

1. The Church does not have to approve the apparitions. The Church can do as She did with the apparitions of Rue du Bac in Paris and the Miraculous Medal. The Church never approved these apparitions. She gave way to the people's widespread acceptance of the Miraculous Medal and thereby the Apparitions to St. Catherine. *Sensus Fidelium* (Latin, meaning "The Sense of the Faithful"), regarding Medjugorje, is that the "sense" of the people says that "Mary is here (Medjugorje)."
2. Catechism of the Catholic Church 2nd Edition
3. The Knights of Columbus also are not officially under the Church, yet they are very Catholic. The Knights of Columbus was founded as a lay organization in 1882, with the basic Catholic beliefs. Each local council appeals to the local Ordinary to be the Chaplain. The Knights of Columbus is still a lay organization, and operates with its own autonomy.

See pages 37–40 for Pricing.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Many who will read this short book have been following the writings of a Friend of Medjugorje for years. His original and unique insights into the important events of our day have won credence in hundreds of thousands of hearts around the world, with those affecting others, thereby, touching into the millions. His moral courage in the face of so many leaders caving in to the pressures of a politically correct world is not only refreshing, but, according to tens of thousands of written testimonies over 30 years, has helped to strengthen deeply those who desire to live the fullness of Christianity. His insights have repeatedly proven prophetic, having their source in the apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Medjugorje. Deeply and personally influenced by the events surrounding Medjugorje, he gave himself to the prayerful application of the words of the Virgin Mary into his life. He has spoken all over the world for over 30 years on Our Lady's messages and how to put them into everyday life. He came to understand that Our Lady was sent by God to speak to mankind in this time because the dangers man is facing are on a scale unlike any the world has ever known since Noah and the flood. He has written more on the messages and events of Medjugorje than any other person, which includes his

bestselling books Words From Heaven[®] (1990), I See Far[™] (1994), How To Change Your Husband[™] (1995), Look What Happened While You Were Sleeping[™] (2007), It Ain't Gonna Happen[™] (2010) and They Fired the First Shot 2012[™] (2012), among hundreds of short books. He hosts a weekly radio program, *Mejanomics*, utilizing Our Lady's messages to bring greater clarity and understanding to important issues of our day. Millions have been deeply affected by his writings. As a witness in real-time of Our Lady's time on earth, his witness and writings will continue to speak — voicing Our Lady's way to hundreds of millions not yet born in the centuries to come.

— Caritas of Birmingham

Medjugorje

The Story in Brief

A VILLAGE SEES THE LIGHT is the title of a story which “Reader’s Digest” published in February 1986. It was the first major news on a mass public scale that told of the Virgin Mary visiting the tiny village of Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina. At that time this village was populated by 400 families.

It was June 24, 1981, the Feast of John the Baptist, the proclaimer of the coming Messiah. In the evening, around 5:00 p.m., the Virgin Mary appeared to two young people, Mirjana Dragičević* and Ivanka Ivanković*. Around 6:40 p.m. the same day, Mirjana and Ivanka, along with four more young people, Milka Pavlović*, the little sister of Marija, Ivan Ivanković, Vicka Ivanković*, and Ivan Dragičević saw the Virgin Mary. The next day, June 25, 1981, along with Mirjana, Ivanka, Vicka and Ivan Dragičević, Marija Pavlović* and Jakov Čolo also saw the Virgin Mary, bringing the total to six visionaries. Milka Pavlović* and Ivan Ivanković only saw Our Lady once, on that first day. These six have become known as and remain “the visionaries.”

* Names at the time of the apparitions, they are now married with last names changed.

These visionaries are not related to one another. Three of the six visionaries no longer see Our Lady on a daily basis. As of October 2017, the Virgin is still appearing everyday to the remaining three visionaries; that's well over 15,823 apparitions.

The supernatural event has survived all efforts of the Communists to put a stop to it, many scientific studies, and even the condemnation by the local bishop; yet, the apparitions have survived, giving strong evidence that this is from God because nothing and no one has been able to stop it. For over 36 years, the apparitions have proved themselves over and over and now credibility is so favorable around the world that the burden of proof that this is authentic has shifted from those who believe to the burden of proof that it is not happening by those opposed to it. Those against the apparitions are being crushed by the fruits of Medjugorje — millions and millions of conversions which are so powerful that they are changing and will continue to change the whole face of the earth.

See **mej.com** for more information.
or **Medjugorje.com**

Seize the Moment

The following spontaneous talk by A Friend of Medjugorje was on December 5, 2005. It was given as a private talk to the Community of Caritas. The date is important to note so as to recognize the prophetic nature it forecasted. It is also an important point that A Friend of Medjugorje has never prepared a written script for his talks, but rather relies on the Holy Spirit for what he is to say.

When we go through a fasting novena, nine days on bread and water, it is like a retreat, and we must look to see what and where we need to change for renewal.

The world is going down the tubes very, very fast. Traveling recently in several states, I have had the opportunity to reflect and observe what is happening in the culture of our nation. It was very enlightening in two ways: there were things learned that were beneficial to the mission, but also, there were insights into what the corporate world is doing. Everything is being neutralized and, as I wrote in *Quietism*, where there is neutrality, there is a void. Satan then fills that emptiness. Our Lady said:

July 4, 1988

“...satan is trying to find emptiness in you, so he can enter and destroy you. DO NOT SURRENDER...”

In the name of “tolerance,” community is destroyed. Instead of working for what is best for everyone, the effort is made to please each individual person, which tears at the very fabric of community and, in turn, pleases no individual.

Our Lady has shown us the opposite. We, in our community, are not going to accomplish what we need to do unless we collectively are dependent on each other. I depend on everybody here to do whatever you are suppose to do individually in the “way of life” Our Lady gives us...and you depend on me individually for that as well. The only way to transmit this and continue this way of life in living the messages of Our Lady is if we ‘live’ our witness. The theme of our little school this year is “witness,” in which the children are studying what it means to be a witness by looking at examples of people from all walks of life who impacted those around them positively by their example.

One thing that is extremely important in witnessing with our lives is how we communicate. There are three ways in which we communicate to people in

any given situation. All three of these help to define for others what we think, how we feel, and what our intentions or expectations are. The categories are first, ‘*words*,’ second, ‘*voice tone and clarity*,’ and third, ‘*body language*.’ The question must then be asked which one has the greatest impact on delivering to others what you want to communicate? There are three percentages: 55%, 38%, and 7%. If you were asked to assign one of these percentages, per each of these categories, of what most impacts the message you are communicating, and what least impacts it, what would you answer? The correct answers are in this order: “Words,” amazingly, are only 7% of the total composition when delivering what we want to communicate to someone else, even though it seems to be the primary way man uses to communicate. “Voice tone and clarity” contributes 38% of the meaning of your communication, and the third category, “body language,” claims 55% of the total picture in what you are communicating!!

These percentages are studied by the corporate world in order to move their products. What the world teaches and its direction form a whole different angle than the direction that we as a community are moving, yet, still it is important to us as Our Lady’s children, to understand what the corporate world understands about people. Why? How does one apply Our Lady’s

messages to their study of communication? How do we in community apply this as Our Lady's children? It all comes down to "witness." Our witness. Go to the streets or even at church on Sunday and look at people. You can see the difficulties people are experiencing just by the way they sit or act with each other, without them saying anything. Body language conveys a lot—it's the primary mode of communication. I probably would have guessed that, but I would never have thought its influence was a high 55%. Those in the corporate world had it broken down. Fifty-five percent of your communication is without words; it's just your body actions!

What we convey to people through our body language, what we carry on our faces, can destroy our witness. Being in community we can destroy it with each other. I knew someone that literally wore an upside-down smile, when they were gloomy. You could see everything going on in that person's heart and thought just by that one countenance. I once was with the visionary, Marija, before an apparition in the early 1990s. She was in a private room and was suffering deeply because of a serious betrayal of a friend. She was in anguish and was weeping. It was time for the apparition, and she had a room packed with people that she had to walk through to reach the altar. She did so quietly. Kneeling down to prepare for the apparition, there were tears still running

down her face. No one but me could see her as she was in front of everyone in the room, because I was right next to her. Just after the apparition, she wiped her eyes and turned to face everyone in the room. She had a beautiful smile on her face and explained to everyone what had happened in the apparition this day. Entering the private room just after, she immediately began weeping again. Marija, very saintly, exemplified what Our Lady said when She appeared in our Bedroom* on November 22, 1988:

“...I want you to be carriers of peace.”

By Marija’s body language, no one who was in the apparition that day knew anything of her suffering. She had communicated a joyful and peaceful countenance even though she wasn’t feeling that at all. She wasn’t happy at all. She knew, however, that the people who had come to the apparition that day needed to see her composed, peaceful and joyful. She, by her body language, lifted up everyone in the room, though she was very low. Where do you think Marija learned such body language? Through the corporate world? No... Marija learned it from the same Woman who learned it

* The Bedroom is the site where the vast majority of the apparitions of Our Lady at Caritas have taken place. Countless conversions have been experienced in this room as well as the profound presence of Our Lady to many who have come to pray on this site. It was through Our Lady’s apparitions in the Bedroom that many plans, including the Community of Caritas, were birthed.

from Her Son. According to the saints, when She met Him at the Fourth Station, even in His suffering He smiled at Her to lift Her spirit.

As Our Lady's children, and especially as Her community, we have experienced the same. The weight of the mission on us never lets up. Sometimes it's difficult to carry. And though we continue to be blessed in many ways, we feel the weight and the responsibility of the mission more and more as society goes its direction, and we go the opposite, as against the tide. But if we wear this burden on our faces, are we going to convert people? Are we going to be bringing people joy? Are we bringing people happiness? In some ways we are so seasoned that when Marija comes here with Our Lady's apparitions, we, in some ways, do not feel the great height of enthusiasm as in the first time Our Lady came. That enthusiasm and freshness is felt by the newer members of the community because the experience is new and never been experienced by them before.

When Joan of Arc rose up to save France, she had to bring enthusiasm to soldiers who had been fighting a war that had been going on for 100 years. Some of these men had been personally fighting their whole lifetime, and they were seasoned to it. They weren't in a position to exemplify that newness, that freshness of the message Joan of Arc brought. They had grown

hard over the years and, through apathy, were losing the war. They did not very easily give way to fresh hope. But Joan of Arc brought in a new beginning, hope and enthusiasm to a worn-out France. If we always look to Our Lady who now comes to save us in a worn-out world, as Joan of Arc did to save France, we can be strengthened with a fresh enthusiasm and hope as the war-hardened soldiers of Joan of Arc's day were rallied and invigorated by her.

Think how hard it is for Marija to appear caring and compassionate to every person who comes to her to tell her of a death in the family, or that they have cancer, or that they are going through a divorce. Marija has literally been told this by tens of thousands of people. It is difficult to always be able to convey the sympathy that people expect from her. And yet, the tragedy is new and fresh for each person, and it is up to Marija to do her best to bring compassion to those whose whole world is crashing down upon them. We, too, must realize that we cannot lose our sensitivity.

We must be mindful that we communicate properly what Our Lady expects of us who She has chosen and has called to this mission. While the corporate world studies, defines and calculates percentages in order to better communicate their own message, we must do the same through prayer and sacrifice, realizing

that the same way of communication applies to us in the Community of Caritas. Yes, they sell the world their plan but we sell the world Our Lady's plan. A plan Our Lady said on January 25, 1987, that God wants to use you for **"...a great plan for the salvation of mankind..."** We have something critically important for the world to communicate. I want to read to you a Scripture passage where Jesus says, in so many words, for you and I to do what those do in selling to the world. The worldly are very crafty in selling its message and Jesus relays to us to be the same in selling His message.

Luke 16:1-9

"There was a rich man who had a steward, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' And the steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that people may receive me into their houses when I am put out of the stewardship.' So, sum-

moning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, "A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' The master then gave his dishonest steward credit for being enterprising; for the sons of this world are wiser in their own generation than the sons of light. What I say to you is this: Make friends for yourselves through your use of this world's goods, so that when they fail you, a lasting reception will be yours. ”

Jesus tells us to be wise using everything at hand morally, not dishonestly as the worldly do, in our dealing with spreading His Light. We can use honestly their methods. So the 7% words, 38% voice tone and clarity, and 55% body language is the same for both the worldly and the spiritual-minded. But they are more affective because they, the “worldly,” are using it more wisely. My point, therefore, is to remind you how this fast can serve you because the reality is that it is easy to weaken

the witness after years of battle. It's been a little over 20 years* that I have been involved in Medjugorje and some of you are a few years behind that, so we've "been there" and "done that;" and we've been there and done it again, and we've been there and done it again. This "seasoning" can interfere with our keeping our witness up. But this is the purpose of our fasting, that we go through this reflection, to reason, to think and commit to renewal. If the world can do it for materialism and for profit, can we not do it for love and for Our Lady? The world's fruit is anxiety. Ours is peace.

One can easily forget our witness is important. We can get to thinking we are in our own little world and, therefore, become narrow in our vision. We can start thinking just about our own life, our own little difficulties, our own problems, magnifying them, or that Our Lady's messages place limitations upon us of what we can do or what we can't do. We start thinking too much of our own situations, and we start losing the scope of the mission. The world suffers from the "What about me? What about me?" syndrome. Everything is everyone else's fault and everyone is a victim.

We must realize that we exist first to live the message and spread it. We spread it through the author-

* This was taken from a talk by a Friend of Medjugorje given on December 5, 2005.

ity of having the *truth*. Giving and spreading authoritative truth comes through the *living* of the message. We, then, are authentic, real and convicting. You cannot spread something with success if you aren't living it. You cannot spread something by your life, authentically, if you are not living what you are spreading. When you try to communicate what you don't live you will have feelings of being a fake, therefore revealing, through body language, you are not for real, as body language makes up 55% of communication. That contradiction will eventually lead to a fall from grace. Your private life must correspond to your public life. You have to live what you say. You have to do what you say. And you have to say what you mean.

We represent something that constantly calls us to renewal. We must constantly rejuvenate ourselves, asking for grace. And if we don't seize the opportunity, if we don't seize the moment in the time we are in, then we lose it. Does your heart grumble about fasting? Realize that you are not *giving* something to God by fasting; you are *getting* something by fasting. Nothing is being taken away from you. Nothing. You are being given something. It just comes down to attitude to grasp that it's a privilege to fast. An honorable and noble act, which we are rewarded far more than by what we put into it.

When I was a kid, religiously every Friday, my mom made bread and when the loaves came out of the oven, we would get in the car, and I'd have to ride all the way to Blessed Sacrament Church, get out of the car, go to the priest's door, knock on the door, give him the still warm loaves of bread, and my momma would wave to him before driving away. The priest would grab the bread from me like it was a baby and take it in his house. Monsignor Keys loved homemade Italian bread. All I heard while growing up was how good Italian bread was. On Fridays, all we talked about was bread and making bread, and I don't have any problem eating bread. Do I like bread? I like bread, but do I get tired of it? Yes, I get tired of it on a 9-day fast. But my attitude is that bread is good. When we are doing a fast for nine days, as now, you won't like bread if you don't like it in your attitude. It's true that there is some bread that tastes like cardboard, but a lot can be changed. Just by your attitude, you make the attitude of what will result. I've seen that. It's been my experience. If a Mom or Dad does not like bread, the children won't. So if you *don't* like bread, you *won't* like fasting. It's a decision of attitude.

I know of some old friends that were so picky about food they could hardly eat anything. It used to aggravate me to see them have to make special dishes

for their children. Why did the parents do that? Because they said their kids didn't like the other food. Why? Because they've been conditioned not to like it through the parents not reinforcing that the food was good. Instead, they reinforced their children's dislike by giving them other choices, rather than encouraging them to eat what Mom prepared, or otherwise go hungry.

Our conditioning has a profound effect on every aspect of our lives. Our Lady is conditioning us through Her messages to like sacrifice, to pray and be joyful, to want sacrifice, want prayer. The messages are for the reconditioning of the world. Often you buy old parts, remanufactured, reconditioned; the old made like new. Man is constantly being conditioned one way or another towards light or away from it. Cultures are conditioned. Where in China is a Chinaman saying, "*I don't like Chinese food, I want Mexican?*" He eats Chinese food because he was raised eating Chinese food. He learned to like it, and he loves it. It's not genetics, it's culture, and it's learned.

I heard a man from New Orleans being interviewed on a Christian radio station after Hurricane Katrina. He was very somber, telling how horrible it was. He said that he lost his wife, his house, everything. He had nothing left. The interviewer asked him, "*What do you miss the most?*" And I'm thinking he is going to

say his wife. He says, “*I miss...I miss running home to eat red beans and rice.*” That’s what he missed the most! It was his culture or his micro-culture down there, which taught him that. Maybe he used to joke a lot about that he could do without a lot of things, even his wife, but never be able to give up his red beans and rice. It reminded me of the story of a man who liked to fish a lot. Finally, his wife got fed up with him and gave him an ultimatum—“*Either quit fishin’ or I’m leavin’.*” His response was, “*I’m sure gonna miss her.*”

My point in these examples is that you are conditioned by your environment, your culture, schooling, etc., and yes, grace can intervene and change that. How you are conditioned affects how or what you will be, by both positive and negative things. The man who shows more love for fishing than for his wife obviously had learned, was taught, was witnessed badly to and learned a “*sel*” “*fish*” set of values. Much conditioning comes from learned attitudes, but these can be changed. So, what we foster in our witness and in our attitudes is what we will be.

Conversion is changing your mentality. You must change how you have been conditioned or what you allow to condition you and change to Our Lady’s ways. If we have a bad attitude towards fasting, if we have a bad attitude towards bread, if we have a bad

attitude towards anything.... That is the attitude in us that will prevail!!! If we change our mentalities, have a good attitude toward fasting, if we have a good attitude toward bread...That is the attitude in us that will prevail!! You decide. You point the course. This is why Our Lady says do not read newspapers because your heads are full of facts and you can no longer pray. You become what you read. It's easy to be good in today's society. Just pick up any newspaper. You will not be satisfied and elevated by reading the news because you are going to be better than everybody in the paper, all the scandals and all the horrible things you see. It's easy to be better than that because the level of society's normal good is way down at the bottom, just above the slime you read in the paper.

What many Christians expose themselves to in their daily way of living, would give a heart attack to Christians 60 years ago. What does Our Lady say? "Don't read the newspapers." She wants us to read Her messages. Her messages are of an elevated life. She's telling us to do as She says, to follow Her example so to be able to *lift* ourselves up through grace to come where She is. That's our striving goal. If we don't strive towards this, we will never have the strength to leave the ways of the world, and we are called to do just that... be in the world, but not of the world. Reflect on this.

This is our call as a community, as Our Lady's children. If we do not communicate the plan of and our witness genuinely, sincerely, who will? We have had Our Lady repeatedly. She has given specific instructions and special messages just for *the way of life* here when She appeared to Marija here. Our Lady does things with us that no one outside of Medjugorje has received.

Our Lady has called each and every one of us to be a "witness" to Her messages by living them in our lives. To take that responsibility seriously, we must be willing to evaluate our own hearts and ask ourselves the question, what do I need to change? Where am I wrong? Why am I not seeing this in the right light? Is my thinking right in regards to a difficulty I may be experiencing? Fasting brings grace to be able to evaluate ourselves with the spirit of truth. But we must recognize that there are moments to "seize." Why go through nine days of fasting if it's not from the heart? Which means we are wasting our time. We do nothing. Who wants to go through nine days of fasting, having to sacrifice, and not get anything for it except the loss of food? That would give *me* a bad attitude. That wouldn't make *me* feel good. That would make *me* not want to do it. That's misery. I don't want to fast that way. But if I go into it knowing I'm going to get something from it and God's going to give me something. He's going to give

me a better attitude. He's going to cleanse me. He's going to wash me. He's going to give me perseverance or a better ability to be resilient. He's going to put a new spirit of God in me. I can then approach fasting, not out of obedience and duty, but with real enthusiasm, hope and yes...even joy. Many of you have told me this fast has been easy. It's true that everyone has had a good spirit. But still seize the moment to see where you can elevate, where you can become better. We've done so many of these fasts we can become seasoned. Even our kids think nothing of it. It's built into our way of life. Seize the moment. Benefit from the grace. Place your whole heart into fasting.

The battlefield is in your mind. Retain and enhance the good attitudes you have received in life, but you must conquer thoughts that are shaped in your life through faulty conditioning and form new attitudes fortified by Our Lady's words, Holy Scripture, the lives of the saints and other spiritual reading. Your new attitudes will succeed with a strong determined will to follow through with your decision for *a new spirit of God* to be born in you. It is Our Lady's desire. I'll read this to you:

April 25, 1985

“Dear children, today I want to tell you to begin to work in your hearts as you are working in the fields. Work and change your hearts so that a new spirit from God can take its place in your hearts...”

The strong, *determined, good will* comes to you by not neglecting prayer. Renewal is impossible without prayer. If you make a determined effort to increase prayer and the fervency in your prayer, you will experience strength in your will to do more, give more, love more. We did not begin this spiritual walk with a nine-day fast. We began with a strong effort by every individual in the community to commit to praying at first three Rosaries in the beginning days, and now, with the Luminous Mysteries, four Rosaries a day. The Rosaries and other prayers and our three to four hours of scheduled prayer gave us the strength and desire to live the fast. The fast gave us the grace to want conversion and renewal. Wanting conversion and renewal has led us to pray more. Praying more will give us a strong and determined will to make the changes that hinder our spiritual lives.

This is the positive cycle that we must learn to develop in our lives. Too many are caught in the nega-

tive cycle of faulty conditioning that leads nowhere except to failure as it feeds the flesh instead of the spirit. Fasting attacks the flesh so that the spirit can be set free. But even fasting is limited without prayer. Do you want renewal? Do you need rejuvenation in your spiritual life? If you have been neglecting prayer, start again.

Prayer will not fail you in leading you out of the darkness back into the Light. Our Lady depends on you to transmit Her messages, and how we live them in the present is to be the window to the future of this century and beyond. What did the early Christians do? How did they put Jesus' message into daily life? In future years from now, people will read and imitate what the *Caritasians* did when they walked with Mary, their Queen, in the time of grace, just at the first Christian communities did following Christ, such as the Thesalonians and the Colossians communities. People will look at how we, in community, put Her words into daily life for their daily lives 100, 200 and more years from now. Seize the moment of fasting. Grow all you can. Advance body, soul and spirit towards holiness, and you will change the world and its future.

The book titled Endurance is a story of approximately 27 men who attempted to be the first to reach the South Pole. Their ship became ice locked and had to be abandoned, and so started a most amazing story

of endurance. It is a secular example of what we should do in wanting to be saved for eternal life, in what these men did to be saved in this life. After almost two years of persevering through weather dipping below zero, inadequately clothed, often wet, frozen and hungry, a small party of them, by a little more than a row boat traveled several hundred miles, through the most turbulent ocean on the face of the earth, to a land where they could get help. They became marooned on the wrong side of the island.

Three of them knew they could not walk to a whaling station on the other side with their limited provisions. They decided to take a short cut and walk where no man has ever walked, through the core where mountains of ice and snow must be traversed. They knew it would be difficult, so they could bring nothing that would slow them down for what they estimated would be a one day's journey, even coats, which without they would not survive through the cold night. They traveled up and down mountains and valleys, several times having to retrace their steps, turning around because of meeting steep cliffs, making headway little by little. They arrived at a point off a mountain of another steep slope that was impossible to traverse. It was getting late. If they stayed where they were, they would freeze in an hour at their present altitude. They had to

get lower. Even if they could have walked and hiked down the steep mountain, they still would not have time to make it before freezing to death.

Speaking rapidly, their leader said they had no time, they had to get down now. He then stunned them and said, “*We are going to hold on to each other and go for it.*” (slide down) The other two objected, thinking that he was joking, but he meant it. He was not even smiling. They thought that it was insane. They had no choice, except to chance it. But what if they flew off a straight cliff or hit a rock? Their leader gave no time to think about it and within 60 seconds of his announcement, the three sat down as one sits on a toboggan, locking legs and hands together, holding on to each other, one behind the other. They kicked off. Their hearts stopped beating as they slid, flew and glided into the unknown. I would like to read you the outcome.

After kicking off...In the next instance their hearts stopped beating. They seemed to hang poised for a split second, then suddenly the wind was shrieking in their ears, and a white blur of snow tore past. Down....down....They screamed – not in terror necessarily, but simply they couldn’t help it. It was squeezed out of them by the rapidly mounting pressure in their ears and against their chest. Faster and faster – down...down...

down! Then they shot forward onto the level, and their speed began to slacken. A moment later they came to an abrupt halt, in a snow bank.

The three men picked themselves up. They were breathless and their hearts were beating wildly. But they found themselves laughing uncontrollably. What had been a terrifying prospect, possibly a hundred seconds before, had turned into a breath-taking triumph.

They looked up against the darkening sky and saw the fog curling over the edge of the ridges, perhaps 2000 feet up above them – and they felt that special kind of pride of a person who in a foolish moment accepts an impossible dare and pulls it off to perfection. (They arrived at the whaling station that evening after almost 2 years of being stranded)

Our Lady's messages often course us to or through the unknown. We can't always see how things will work out, but we must remember Her words, **“You just listen to me.”** Are we willing to do for the spiritual and eternal life what men throughout the ages have done for earthly life in saving themselves? Too much planning builds bureaucracy. Too much thinking can stop you before you start. As these three jumped, did

not plan, did not think, but trusted only that it was their chance, how much more are we to trust in Our Lady's plans and Her messages? We do not have to know everything, the outcome, etc. Sometimes it takes just leaping in to follow Our Lady's messages, even if it causes us more suffering and hurts, we know after we take that ride, we can look back up at the dark clouds we were in and then see by taking a chance on Our Lady that everything turned to our favor. It won't happen in 100 seconds, rather it could take years to course us out of our predicaments, but Our Lady's messages save, rescue, heal and will make all things new. Months, even years of perseverance and endurance is the key, seize the moment of grace. It will lead to blue skies.

Dare to Live Our Lady's Way,
A Friend of Medjugorje

*"Thank you very much for keeping us posted,
inspired, fired up to fight for our freedom. "*

Babes

Aurora, USA

*"Thank You so much for your life-saving infor-
mation, and your website!"*

M.M.

Connecticut

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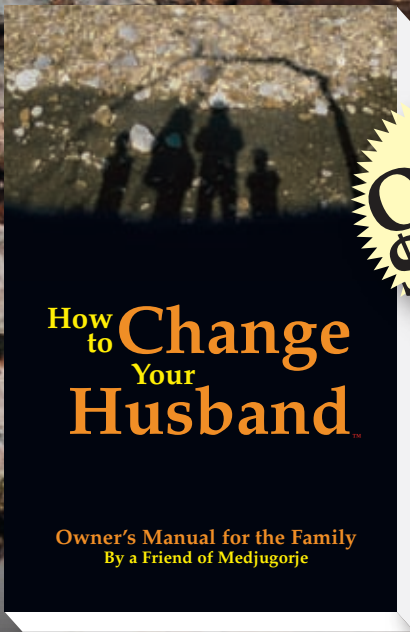
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*Yours in Christ and in Prayer,
A Priest from United Kingdom*

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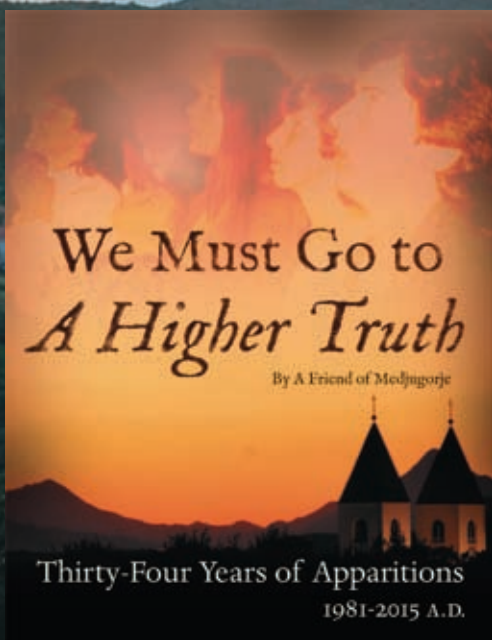
I SEE FAR

By a Friend of Medjugorje

Never authoring a book that is a let-down, A Friend of Medjugorje's writing, *I See Far*[™], is strongly connected to Our Lady's apparitions in Medjugorje. A book of surprises, worth buying as a gift, that will quake the soul and make life radically different, fruiting into happiness few people experience in today's society. A book which convicts and motivates one to a more richer and happier life. Testimony after testimony repeats that *I See Far*[™] is one of the most impacting and life-changing books they have ever read.

"I applaud the book, "I See Far," The book put into words something I have suspected for a long time...I quit watching the tube a long time ago, believing it to be a waste of one's life. Kids should run in the woods, swing from trees, swim in the creek down the road, and play "hide and seek" half the night with the other kids in the neighborhood."

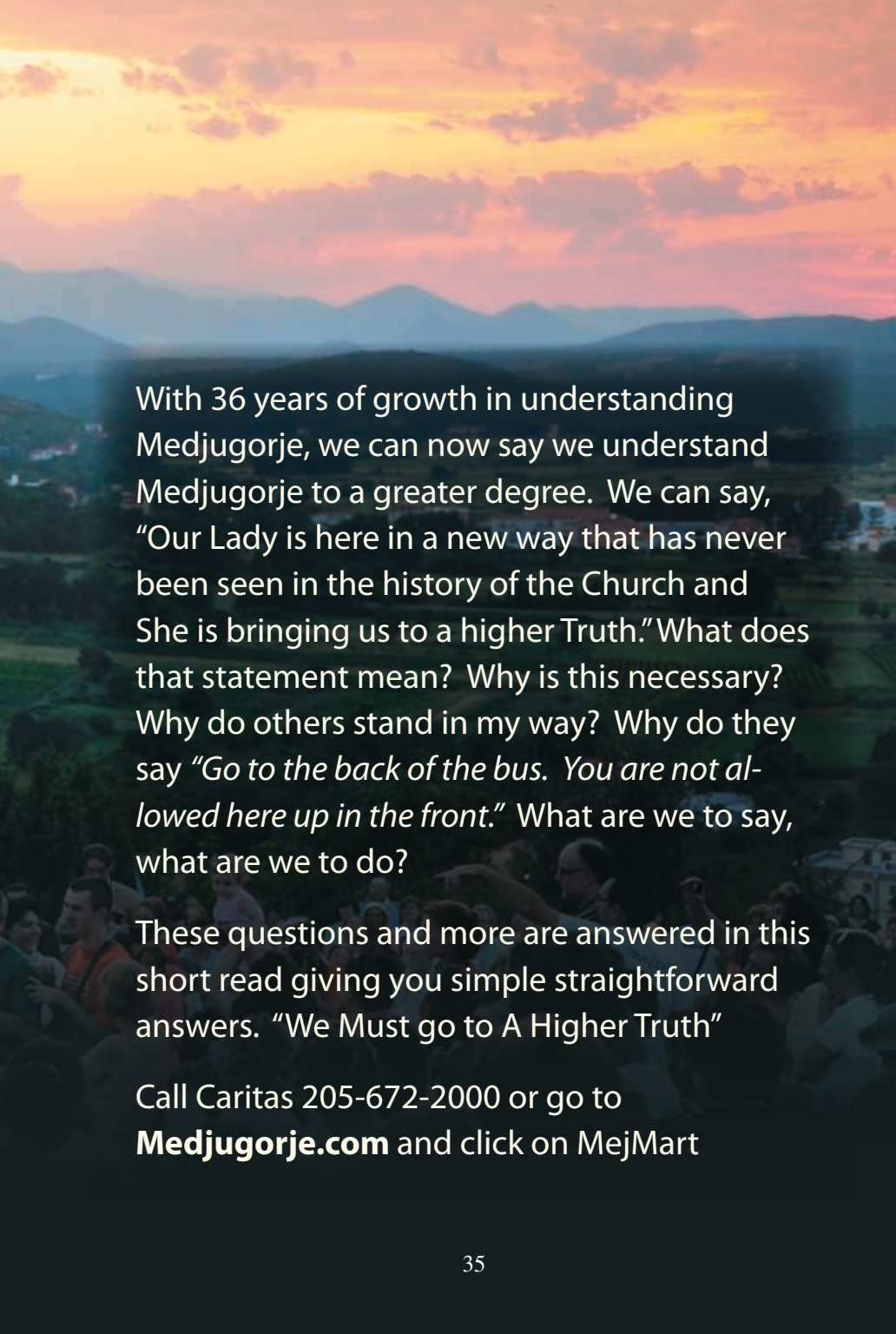
Davison, Michigan



"What a clear and strong writing! A Friend of Medjugorje has clarified questions from the past, present and future regarding the apparitions of Our Lady of Medjugorje. Thank you."

Kathy

Marion, Ohio USA



With 36 years of growth in understanding Medjugorje, we can now say we understand Medjugorje to a greater degree. We can say, "Our Lady is here in a new way that has never been seen in the history of the Church and She is bringing us to a higher Truth." What does that statement mean? Why is this necessary? Why do others stand in my way? Why do they say *"Go to the back of the bus. You are not allowed here up in the front."* What are we to say, what are we to do?

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Call Caritas 205-672-2000 or go to **Medjugorje.com** and click on MejMart

Five “Must Do’s” in Medjugorje

Apparition Mountain, Cross Mountain, the Visionaries, St. James Church, and the Caritas Mission House, these are the five “**must do’s**” to have a complete Medjugorje pilgrimage. Throughout the years, pilgrims from every nation have made the Caritas of Birmingham Mission House in Medjugorje a part of their pilgrimage. Countless numbers have relayed to us that it is there, in the Mission House, where they came to understand more fully Our Lady’s messages and plans for the world. It is why people, who have returned home from their pilgrimages, have told others going to Medjugorje to go to the Caritas Mission House, stating that the Caritas Mission House was a high point of their pilgrimage and a “**must do**” to make a pilgrimage to Medjugorje a complete and more profound experience.

Don’t Miss a Visit to the Caritas Mission House



“We come in several times during our pilgrimages to talk about the messages with the community. We are always welcome and encouraged to bring others in as well. We have gone to Medjugorje many times and the Mission House is always a place we must visit.”

*B & G
Ireland*

“The billboard drew me and my family into the Caritas Mission House. I was suprised to find the message and CD’s in my language.”

Family of 7 from Spain

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Nun from England



Look for the **St. Michael statue** and “**This is My Time**” Signs.

Caritas of Birmingham Mission House is operated by the Community of Caritas.

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