

Reflections on the message of April 25, 1999

"Dear children! Also today I invite you to prayer. Little children, be joyful carriers of peace and love in this peaceless world. By fasting and prayer, witness that you are mine and that you live my messages. Pray and seek! I am praying and interceding for you before God that you convert; that your life and behavior always be Christian. Thank you for having responded to my call."

April 25, 1999

Again I greet all those who are following the messages, and before we reflect on this month's message, let us first remember what Mary said to us last month. The first thing that she told was to pray with the heart, and this we should never forget because it is after all very simple to pray with the heart. When we decide for prayer due to our love for Mary, then create the conditions, take time for it, make a quiet corner in our families for prayer, protect ourselves from the outside noises of TV and radio, and then remain loyal to that decision, then prayer with the heart has begun. For this to happen it is not important what we have in our minds or what feelings we have in our hearts, because we started out of love and that is the first condition for praying with the heart. Never may we, I believe, forget this intention of hers. Mary then called us to pray for those who hate and for the conversion of those who are blaspheming and who do not encounter God's love, and then also especially for the resurrection of love within the Church. Her call for us to place God in the first place in our lives is just as important, and with this call Mary is reminding us of the First Commandment -- give honor to God, the only true God. This also reminds us of the Feast Day on which Mary gave us that message, when she at the Annunciation responded with the words "Thy will be done", and with those words then decided for God and placed God in the first place. This is important because we know that the first Eve turned God away and then placed someone else in the first place in her life. Of course Mary's wish is that we do what she did, and then she also wanted us to become friends of the Risen Jesus. This can only happen when we really stay loyal to

prayer, and so, in the hope that we may remain loyal to Mary's intentions and then carry these intentions in our prayers, I now wish to give you some more information.

Regarding the visionaries -- Vicka has now returned from the USA; Ivan has, after many months there, returned alone while his wife and daughter have stayed there; Mirjana, Jacov and Ivanka are all here; and so it is only Marija who is still in Italy. The three, Vicka, Ivan and Marija, are, we believe, still having their daily apparitions, and already 17 years and 10 months have now passed since the first apparition on June 25, 1981. For how much longer these daily apparitions will continue nobody knows, and there are no signs for how much longer they will last.

Although pilgrims from many countries canceled entirely or at least rescheduled their trips here for another time, all due to the hostilities south of here, we still have many pilgrims here from Germany, France, Austria, England, Poland, Korea, the USA and England, Chile, Ireland, and Italy -- all of whom had the courage to still come. On the weekends more and more pilgrims are coming from throughout all of Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina. Slovenians too are present on all weekends.

Concerning the war in Kosovo, let me assure you that it is 3-400 kilometers southeast of here, and that there is really no reason at all to be so fearful of coming to Medjugorje. When we look at that conflict from the Medjugorje perspective, then we can say that that conflict down there began some 20 years ago, in 1979, and that the satanic dance of violence and of wars is back again in Kosovo, there where the entire thing really also began and there where we also hope that it will soon end. When Medjugorje began, the Communist media compared it to Kosovo, and that because in Medjugorje they saw a counter-revolution and in Kosovo they saw a nationalism, but the war really began due to the pressure placed by the Serbian Communists upon the Catholic Croats and also the Serbian nationalism pressuring the Kosovars while at the same time giving Medjugorje that same color. Here it only concerns the Serbs identifying themselves with the Communist Regime and then wanting to create a Greater Serbia. From the testimonies given by those responsible at the EU, NATO and the USA, one sees perfectly well what

should have happened much earlier, because many have now said that had they known what it concerned some 10 years ago and had intervened in the same manner, then it would never have come to a war. From here we may say that we hope that the conflict will soon find an end there where it began in 1979, and throughout most of that time Medjugorje was always the lone call from out in the desert for peace and for prayer and fasting -- the only activities that can bring an end even to all wars and natural catastrophes. So throughout all these ongoing episodes of hate and violence, one can see Medjugorje as the prophetic word, for, as we all know, already on the third day of these apparitions Mary called us to peace and then continued to tell us what we can do: to fast and to pray and so we can avert wars. God speaks clearly through Mary, and even though she has said nothing specific about that war, she said very clearly and repeatedly what it is that we can do about it. God speaks clearly but He also leaves us our freedom, and so this new situation should only help us to take Mary's message seriously even when we cannot understand or even see their results clearly or fast enough. With this in mind, I invite all of you to pray and to fast, something of which we might not have done enough, that peace may come to all people. Only this is Mary's constant wish for the world, but also our own assignment.

ALSO TODAY I INVITE YOU TO PRAYER

From day to day and from message to message we see that Mary never tires of calling us to prayer. When we throughout all the many messages are called to prayer, then although so many, thank God, have again due to Medjugorje started praying, we also must realize that there are many more throughout the world that have dropped prayer. The world, as we all are able to see, is very far from God, and it is from this perspective that we can also come to understand Mary's repeated calls to prayer. Prayer means to encounter God, and to have time for this encounter. In February and March, Mary called us to become Jesus' friends, and we all know that friends meet one another and always have time for one another. Mary simply wants us to develop a friendly relationship between us and God, between us and her, and that we meet each other and that, by way of this meeting, our lives may then change into what God had in

mind for our lives. This then is also the way for which we all yearn, and therefore when we do not pray we are also unable to grow to become the people that God had wanted us to become and that the world wishes of us to become. We see this clearly in the second sentence of the message when Mary says...

LITTLE CHILDREN, BE JOYFUL CARRIERS OF PEACE AND LOVE IN THIS PEACELESS WORLD

It is in prayer, and therefore in our meeting with God, that our growth can occur, and we should then also be able to open ourselves to love and to peace and, in so doing, be able to become the...

JOYFUL CARRIERS OF PEACE AND LOVE IN THIS PEACELESS WORLD

It is here then that a relationship between us and God ought to be occurring and then also a new relationship between us and this peaceless world. God is the only source for peace and love, and all men yearn exactly for this same peace and love. And when he has gotten these from God, then he will not be able to keep them only for himself, and here Mary thinks of us all as being her diplomats, her Apostles in this peaceless world and to be the ones who offer this peace and this love to this peaceless world. God introduced Himself as the God of peace and as God who loves. For us all these two revelations are the most beautiful imaginable -- peace and love -- and this is because it is these two for which all of us yearn, yet as beautiful it is to accept peace and love, it still can be difficult to carry it and to then give it the others. When we think about all the lack of peace, all the conflicts, all the misunderstanding and all the wars, then we also know how difficult it can become to be joyful, to be able to have peace, and to let love grow, because there is so much that is negative in the world. Jesus whom we are following is the King of Peace, and he became this King the moment He died on the Cross for us, and already before then when He prayed and offered reconciliation to those who crucified Him. Mary, at the same time as her Son, certainly wished for and even spoke and became capable of the same words as He, because to forgive and to pray at that same moment for those who did evil to her Son Jesus was not easy. So just as we must be aware that it is not always easy, so too must we be aware that God will

not ask anything of us that He did not give us to begin with. So, a cooperation must be developed between us and God, and then we will become capable of bringing this peace into our families, into our communities and then into the whole world. Mary wishes it to be very clear to us and to all the world that we all belong to her, and already from the very beginning she not only called us to prayer but also to fasting.

BY FASTING AND PRAYER, WITNESS THAT YOU ARE MINE AND THAT YOU LIVE MY MESSAGES

I also believe that when someone says he is praying and fasting that he is, even without ever mentioning Medjugorje or the Queen of Peace, is thereby making himself legitimate. Prayer and fasting is, one could say, the identification card for all those who accept the message of Medjugorje. Prayer and fasting have been together throughout all of Jewish as well as Christian and Catholic tradition. It is however through Medjugorje that fasting has again become alive, because before it had almost become forgotten and lost. Jesus Himself gave prayer and fasting a special power, and we can think of the situation when the Apostles came and said that they could not free someone of evil spirits and then asked Jesus why this was so. He then responded: "Only through prayer and fasting can one send away this type of evil spirit." Mary, by way of her message of prayer and fasting, made fasting again become actual and contemporary and, thank God, it has therefore again entered the lives of many, many people around the world. By way of so many people's testimonies one can now say that Medjugorje has helped a great many people to be open to the supernatural, and this does not come about from nothing or from something vague, but it comes about due to so many people that are now following Mary's message and who have thereby proven that they really belong to her. When we again think of the situation in this area, the ongoing cycle of violence that began in Kosovo in 1979 and that is closing there now, then we can see that Medjugorje, due to the means that God placed in our hands, has really become a light and a call to peace. So we here have another renewed impulse for showing that we are Mary's children and that we therefore really do live her messages. When we, during this season of Easter and the Holy Spirit, hear in this message...

PRAY AND SEEK!

...we can think of Mary and the Apostles who prayed together to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We also think of the many words that Jesus said to us to encourage us to pray and to also seek. He also said: "He who seeks will find, and for he who knocks it will be opened." So, here it concerns the fact that every one of us, no matter in what situation we find ourselves, should very consciously begin to seek and to pray. Seeking and praying are also an activity. He who seeks also keeps hope in his heart, has the will inside, believes and trusts. Those who no longer seek and therefore have no expectations, who got stuck somewhere are those who really have no hope, who no longer believe or trust. It is often the case that we hear from people here, including the youth, the words: "It is not worth it. I see no purpose in it. It is useless." It is due to this that so many people live in fear and become depressed. Many people no longer find themselves in this world, and because of this the number of suicides is also on the increase, and violence becomes an everyday thing. All these are symptoms of those who do not seek, who have stayed stagnant, and who do not meet with God. That is why it is so very important for us and we must thank God that Mary has moved so many people. A pilgrim is one who seeks, and anyone who even out of discouragement, a sense of worthlessness or darkness decides to become a pilgrim, it already means that he has received the grace not wish to stop, and instead wishes to overcome his situation. Many people have witnessed here that their lives that had become dry have again become alive due to their pilgrimage to Medjugorje. Being able to seek at the same time signifies being ready to bring hope to others, and Mary, the new Eve, the mother of life and the mother of the King of Peace, is the only one who can spur us toward this activity. We know that evil, sin and hate also spur people on, and that those people also try to locate others with whom they can fulfill their destructive plans. This is what is most dangerous when it comes to evil and to sin. The person who does evil never remains alone, he finds himself those with whom he does the negative, and he then does not get tired. In the Bible it is written that Satan runs around the world like a lion in order to catch someone in order to destroy them. Although love and light are always stronger, we must still cooperate, and may this truth also move us in this Easter season. Those who have sought Jesus on the first day of the week -- the

women, Magdalene, Peter and John -- all moved and sought Him with hope mixed with fear and sorrow. Although their hearts were closed with fear, their hope was still stronger and they moved, they looked for Him, and then they did find Him. So when Mary says...

SEEK!

...then it is again a renewed impulse for us really to move ourselves, and to seek peace. God will give us peace. At the end of this message, Mary again confirms for us that...

I AM PRAYING AND INTERCEDING BEFORE GOD THAT YOU CONVERT

So she is our intermediary who loves us and who of course wishes to help us. She is untiring in trying to help us and in giving us new impulses so that all of us may begin seeking her Son, the King of Peace, and then, once we have found Him, to convert. Mary then also gives us the contents of this conversion here when she adds...

THAT YOUR LIFE AND BEHAVIOR ALWAYS BE CHRISTIAN

...and which is, of course, the deeper purpose of conversion. It is sin that separated us from God and then turned us toward the world, and then also threatened to destroy our lives. Diversion from God and turning toward the world is really the path of darkness and of destruction. Conversion toward God means returning to life and to the light and peace. The person who lives in the light will in all that he thinks, says and does certainly be Christian. Being Christian means to be Christ-like. Of course, when we hear that our lives may always be Christian, we may then ask ourselves how we stand toward ourselves. Do we really love ourselves or do we destroy ourselves? Do we seek God or do we seek what really hinders us from the path of seeking Him? Or are we already in some way sure that we will never find that for which we are seeking? God is the witness and Mary helps us, and therefore really none of us may stop internally and say: "It is not worth the trouble." Mary is with us and she believed, and she too never said that she understood. She trusted and simply said: "Thy will be done." And then we should also ask ourselves how we stand toward the others, toward nature and toward the

world. Is it a Christian relationship in the family or there where we live? Only a Christian relationship in the light of the Gospels is really a deep human relationship, and a deep human relationship is a Christian relationship. Only in this way can we expect a renewed world and only with a Christian relationship with it can we have hope for our future and then move forward with certainty, and for this we wish to pray:

Lord, our God, we thank You for being the God of Peace and for sending us Your Son, Jesus Christ, the King of Peace. Thank You that You are sending us Mary, the Queen of Peace, and that She is calling us to peace in Your name, Lord with Your Son Jesus, the carrier of peace and love, in this peaceless world. We ask that You give us the grace that we fulfill the task that Mary gives us in the message, so that we also will become carriers of peace and love like Your humble servant Mary. Free us from all lack of peace and restlessness in our hearts and liberate us from everything within us that is not love, that is not peace. Give us the grace that we become witnesses of the true peace and true love that You alone give in our families, in the church and in this world. We pray to You for those responsible in the Church and in the world that they also may become carriers of peace and love. Lord, You know how many of Your children are suffering in the many wars and conflicts. Send comfort to the sorrowful, hope to the despairing and give them the grace to experience Your love. Have mercy on them all also and send them people who proclaim peace and love in Your name. Bless all those who have opened themselves to Your peace and who carry Your love to others. Bless the visionaries, the whole parish and all pilgrims so that we become tireless and courageous carriers of Your peace and love in Medjugorje in these times. This we ask You with Mary, the Queen of Peace, in the name of Your Son, Jesus , the King of Peace, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Fr. Slavko, Medjugorje

April, 1999