

Marian Apparitions in Medjugorje

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History is full of alleged Marian apparitions, with many countries recording events that have involved both individuals and crowds of witnesses. It's a matter of fact, then, to believers and some non-believers, that these occurrences have actually happened.

Up till recently these Marian apparitions have belonged to a time past. The famous apparitions at Lourdes, for example, occurred over 100 years ago. Events that happened so long ago can be questionable to many people and they tend to make people lack a certain belief in all that has supposedly been revealed.

In June 1981 several visionaries reported Marian apparitions in the present day. The Blessed Virgin Mary, they asserted, was visiting them each day, giving them messages that were to be passed onto the world. These messages are from Heaven, it is reported, with the aim of re-educating us and getting us to re-center our lives on God.

The daily apparitions occur in a small village called Medjugorje in Bosnia. When you consider that the apparitions have been occurring there for nearly 30 years now, you can wonder if any evidence of fraud has been forthcoming over the years. The visionaries have undergone various scientific tests during their apparitions, however, and up till now have satisfied the scientific community that all appears genuine. It's impossible to say that the visionaries are experiencing Heavenly encounters, of course, but scientific tests nevertheless indicate that something unusual, to say the least, is happening.

It is interesting to note that when the Marian apparitions began in 1981 the visionaries were mere children, unschooled as far as the Blessed Virgin Mary's reported manifestations in our world are concerned. Also, there was ample opportunity in the beginning to trap the children into admitting that it was all make-believe. Some 30 years later, however, it is still impossible to get them to change their stories and to find evidence of disbelief, so Medjugorje persists in affecting countless lives.

Anything to do with the Blessed Virgin Mary is usually associated with the Catholic community. In the more than 30 million people who have visited Medjugorje since 1981, however, there has been a mixture of Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and other denominations. Such, then, is the inspiration to believers in all religions that wish to be associated with Medjugorje and the messages of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

How long will the apparitions persist? No one knows, but we are told that when the occurrences stop, three warnings will be proclaimed worldwide,

Ten days before each warning the world will be advised that a warning will take place. This, then, will authenticate the apparitions and serve as an incentive for the world to convert from sin.

In addition, a visible and indestructible sign will be viewable at the site of the apparitions in Medjugorje. The sign is for those that don't believe in the apparitions and it will help them believe in God's existence.

For those seeking God or wanting evidence of his existence, visit Medjugorje where the Marian apparitions are occurring daily or access the monthly Medjugorje Message online on a regular basis.



For more information on the Medjugorje phenomenon, visit:

<http://www.medjugorjenews-nz.org>

Our Lady of Međugorje

Our Lady of Međugorje (also called **Queen of Peace**) is the title given to the Blessed Virgin Mary by those who believe that she appeared to six Herzegovinian Croat children in Međugorje, Bosnia and Herzegovina (at the time in SFR Yugoslavia).^[2] The visionaries often refer to the apparition as the "Gospa"^[3] which is Croatian for "Lady".

Visionaries

On June 24, 1981, young Mirjana Dragicevic^[4] and Ivanka Ivanković^[5] reported seeing an apparition of the Virgin Mary in a village in what is now Bosnia-Herzegovina. The following day another vision was reported, this time also by four other young people: Marija Pavlović^[6] Jakov Colo,^[7] **Vicka Ivanković**,^[8] and Ivan Dragicevic.^[9]

The children claim that they saw an apparition on the hill Crnica (on the place called Podbrdo); the alleged apparition was a white form with a child in her arms. Surprised and scared, they did not approach. The next day at the same time four of the youths returned, and were later joined by the other two.

For several years the six visionaries reported seeing daily apparitions from the Virgin Mary and Međugorje became crowded with pilgrims. It has been reported that Our Lady of Međugorje has been appearing daily to three of these visionaries ever since, some say that they have stopped having daily apparitions.

At the time of the first alleged apparition Vicka Ivanković was sixteen years old. She claims to have prayed with Our Lady and talked to her; she also claims to have been given nine "secrets". Her alleged visions are related to the Italian writer and mystic Maria Valtorta, in that Mary told Vicka: "If a person wants to know Jesus he should read Maria Valtorta".^{[10][11][12][13][14]}

Her "prayer mission", said to have been given by the Blessed Virgin Mary, is to pray for the sick. Vicka says that her daily apparitions have not yet stopped. Vicka claims to have received a biography of Mary's life, contained in two hand written notebooks, which Vicka has said will be published when the Blessed Virgin Mary tells her to do so.^[15]

Vicka Ivanković continues to meet with pilgrims to Međugorje, which she has done for over twenty one years. Vicka is often called "the smiling visionary" because she always has a smile filled with joy on her face.

Regarding her alleged visions, Vicka once stated:^[16]

"Before, I prayed from pure habit. Now I've turned completely to prayer. I commit my life completely to God. I feel sorry for those who do not believe in God, because Our Lady wants no one to be lost. We can help each other find the right way to God. It's up to the people to obey the messages and be converted. Great things are happening here: Our Lady is among us. She wishes to attract everyone to Her Son. That's the reason She has been coming so long and so often. Here, everyone feels the nearness and the love of God. As role model and example, Gospa (Mary) began, in January 1983, to tell me Her life story, which took over two years."

A 2009 paper by Yale Divinity School student Daniel Klimek details the intricate connection between the Međugorje apparitions and the writings of Italian mystic Maria Valtorta.^{[17][18]}



Statue often mistaken for the Gospa of Međugorje^[1] (see Description in article)

Reported messages and visions

In the nearly 30 years that she has purportedly been appearing to the six visionaries, they have been reporting receiving messages from the Virgin Mary asking for people to pray often, fast and do penance.^[19]

Many phenomena have been reported at Međugorje, such as the sun spinning, dancing in the sky, turning colors, or being surrounded by objects such as hearts or crosses. Many have reported that they have been able to look at the sun during those times without any damage to their eyes. The tall cement cross erected on Mount Podbrdo (where many of the apparitions had taken place) has reportedly disappeared and reappeared or else glowed as if lit with lights, although there is no electricity on the mountain.^[20] Not everyone reports seeing the same miracles at the same time. Miraculous healing has also been reported.^[21]

Description of Our Lady

Franciscan Fr. Janko Bubalo questioned the visionaries and asked them to describe Mary's appearance. According to how they saw Our Lady, she is 18 to 20 years old, slender and around 165 cm tall. Her face is long and oval with black hair. Her eyes are blue with delicate eyelashes and thin black eyebrows. She has a nice, little nose and rosy cheeks. She has beautiful reddish thin lips and her smile is more like some indescribable gentleness. It's visible as if somehow under her skin.

Her simple dress is bluish-grey and falls freely all the way down to the little whitish cloud on which she is standing. Her veil is pure white and covers her head and shoulders. It also reaches down to the little cloud. She has a crown of twelve golden stars on her head.

Finally he asked, "Is Our Lady really beautiful, as you have said?" Their answer was, "Well, really we haven't told you anything about that. Her beauty cannot be described. It is not our kind of beauty. It is something ethereal, something heavenly, something that we'll only see in Paradise and then only to a certain degree."^[22]

Official position of the Holy See

The messages attributed to Our Lady of Međugorje have a very strong following among many Catholics. As is typical for all claims of private revelation the Catholic Church follows a standard criteria for evaluating apparitions that takes a significant time, research, and study before it issues an official approval or disapproval. The Roman Catholic Church has declared that it cannot be affirmed that the reported apparitions are supernatural in character.^[23] On March 17, 2010, the Vatican announced it was beginning a formal investigation of the apparitions at Međugorje. Cardinal Camillo Ruini is to head the commission that will study the matter.^[24]

A letter by Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, on March 23, 1996, reaffirmed that official parish or diocesan pilgrimages to Međugorje understanding it "as a place of authentic Marian apparitions" are not permitted by the Catholic Church.^[25] Individual Catholics are allowed to travel in pilgrimage anywhere, including Međugorje, and are entitled to spiritual care there.^[26]

On July 28, 2009, the Pope granted Father Tomislav Vlašić's own request for laicisation. Vlašić, who had been until 1984 the spiritual director of the visionaries of Međugorje, was under investigation for events that occurred after he had left Međugorje, including "dubious doctrine, the manipulation of consciences, suspect mysticism and disobedience towards legitimately issued orders".^[27] He was also accused of sexual immorality with a nun, allegations which he had covered up.^{[27][28]} On pain of excommunication, Vlašić is prohibited from discussing any religious points relating to or even mentioning Međugorje publicly.^{[27][29][30]}

References

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- [10] http://www.MariaValtortaWebRing.com/Pages/014_1988.htm
- [11] http://www.valtorta.org/the_poem_of_the_man_god_about_the_poem.asp
- [12] http://www.mariavaltortawebring.com/Pages/002_Correspondence.htm
- [13] <http://www.medjugorje.ws/en/echo/echo-102/>
- [14] <http://www.medjugorje.ws/en/echo/echo-076>
- [15] The Life of the Madonna (<http://www.marcocorvaglia.com/medjugorje-en/the-life-of-the-madonna.html>) The Madonna this evening has begun to narrate her life. She tells them and they follow her in her growth. She said she will tell them, in episodes, her life. She has forbidden them to tell it to others until she has said everything. She has assigned to each of them the task to write her biography. [Kronika ukazanja (Chronicle of the Apparitions), vol. I, 07/01/1983, p. 353. Original text: Gospa večeras počela pričati svoj život. Priča im i gledaju je u njenom razvoju. Rekla im je da će im u nastavcima ispričati svoj život. O tome im je zabranila drugima pričati dok im sve ne rekne. Naglasila je svakomu od njih da piše njezin životopis.]
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- [17] "The Gospels According to Christ? Combining the Study of the Historical Jesus with Modern Mysticism", Daniel Klimek (http://pantheon.yale.edu/~rpl24/Glossolalia/Home_files/The_Gospels_According_to_Christ-Klimek.pdf)
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- [19] <http://www.medjugorje.com/medjugorje-messages/annual-messages.html>
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- [21] <http://www.medjugorje.com/medjugorje/signs-and-miracles/540-testimonies-of-physical-healings.html>
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External links

- Parish of Medjugorje (<http://www.medjugorje.hr/>) (**English**)
 - Medjugorje.com (<http://www.medjugorje.com/>) (**English**)
 - Official Documents on Medjugorje (<http://medjugorjedocuments.blogspot.com>) - Official documents from the Vatican and other sources
 - Shrine of Međugorje – "official" website for Spain and Latin America (<http://www.centromedjugorje.org/>) (**Spanish**)
 - Medjugorje.org (<http://www.medjugorje.org/>) since 1995 (**English**)
 - web Medjugorje (<http://www.webmedjugorje.com>) (**English**)
 - Mladifest Međugorje – international youth festival (<http://www.mladifest.com/>) (**English**)
 - Manfred Hauke, chairman of the German Mariological society, on Međugorje (<http://catholiclight.stblogs.org/archives/2010/02/hauke-on-medj.html/>) (**English**)
 - Messages of Our Lady of Međugorje (<http://www.medjugorje.ws/en/>) (**English**)
 - Medjugorje Without a Mask (<http://www.marcocorvaglia.com/medjugorje-en/home.html>) (**English**) / (**Italian**)
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 - Ivanka Ivankovic-Elez speaks at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Valley Stream, NY (May 16, 2011) (http://www.defendingmedjugorje.com/Pages/Medjugorje_2011-05-16.htm) DefendingMedjugorje.com
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