

From the Grey Book 'Open your hearts to Mary Queen of Peace'

(P101 -)

Give all your worries to the Lord

Last Thursday's message was this: *"Thank you, dear children, for offering up all your worries about the fruit harvest; Our Lord loves you while he is testing you. Always do the same when you have worries: always offer everything up to Our Lord. Thank you for following my call".*

This message tells us three important facts from the theological and practical point of view. Our Lady leads us to Our Lord, to Jesus, saying: "Our Lord loves you." She has repeated many times: "I love you." In a message for Jelena she said: *"If you knew how much I love you you would cry for joy."* These short messages show us a pure Mariology; Our Lady tells us : *"Our Lord loves you even when He is testing you; give all your worries to Our Lord."* This is said especially for those priests who ask themselves what is happening at Medjugorje and perhaps are sceptical. For me, as a priest, this is a criteria of authenticity because Our Lady's only duty is to bring us to Jesus, to Our Lord. She behaves in all the messages as she did at Cana in Galilee where she said: 'Do everything He tells you.' She always shows herself as the simple handmaid. She said something else of great importance to our people here : *"Thank you for offering all your worries about the fruit harvest to Our Lord."* People had many reasons to be worried as they picked the fruit recently because the vines and everything else had been destroyed by heavy rainfalls. Our Lord and His Mother see this, too, and console us: do not be worried. In March, through Jelena, Our Lady said: *"Every Thursday, during the Adoration, meditate on the passage from the Gospel of Saint Matthew 6,24 up to the end of the chapter."* This passage tells us that we cannot serve two masters. A decision is necessary, a choice. Another thought here is this : look at the birds of the air, the grass in the field .... you cannot lengthen your life by worrying, so abandon yourselves to Our Lord and He will guide everything. The third fact is to search first of all for the Kingdom of Heaven. Father Laurentin commented on this : Our Lady has adapted herself to the smallest things in our lives and tells us not to worry because she knows that the vines have been destroyed by the rains, but to remember that Our Lord loves us even when He sends us trials. This is an example: you have done well in giving your worries to Our Lady and always do this when you find yourselves in similar situations.

There were more than two hundred priests here on Saturday and one hundred and fifty-two celebrated Mass together, there was a large assembly and, through Marija Pavlovic, they asked if Our Lady had a message for priests. Our Lady answered: *"Dearest Children, Our Lord has permitted me to gather you here : always work with the Holy Spirit and always pray before you start work."* In a message at the end of September, Our Lady said: *"Thank you for helping me by your prayer and fasting because my plans and my projects are being fulfilled; but continue to pray so that all my plans may be fulfilled."* I spoke to the visionaries, as I do every week, and asked if they know anything about these plans and if they are allowed to tell us anything about them. They said that they know about them but are not permitted to say anything.

In another message, the Madonna said: *"Our Lord has allowed me to gather you here"* which means that Our Lady has a plan. My coming here to Medjugorje, also yours and that of father Tomoslav, is part of Our Lady's plan. There is a great plan but we cannot see it all. For me, working here, only one thing is important now: to do everything I can today. I have learnt what it means to abandon oneself to God and to let oneself to be guided because, many times, we have found ourselves in a situation without a solution but then realised that there was a solution, a new attitude to learn: abandonment to God.

Several times we have been given the messages when we found ourselves in a difficult situation : *"Why are you worrying ? Pray and fast; I will guide everything."* There is resistance here, of course. Twice this summer Our Lady repeated: *"Pray because the Devil wants to destroy my plans."* We have always felt the attacks very strongly several days after she has said this. This is the direction in which Our Lady is guiding us - we must learn, and on the one hand, to pray and fast and, on the other, to abandon everything to Our Lord, all our difficulties because He really does know everything. Our Lady has told us many times that He knows; that He knows our life and that He loves us - she is asking us to allow Our Lord to do what He wishes with us. In this sense, we are able to see what is meant by conversion.

Our Lady has told us to pray with our heart when she asked for the complete rosary. What does it mean to pray with our heart ? it means allowing the Word to speak to us and when this happens then our conversion has begun or is continuing. Our Lady has not come to give us new messages: "Peace - Conversion - Faith - Prayer - Fasting", it is all in the Gospel. The first words of Jesus were: 'Be converted'. We do not need the apparitions at the level of revelation or new truths, but they are to enable us to see these things in a practical way and to stimulate us to put them into practice. Our problem is not that we do not know what to do, but the difficulty to do it. Our Lady said: *"Many people have started to pray, but pray with your heart. Do not allow prayer and fasting to become a habit, a routine for you. Many have started to pray and fast only because others are doing so."* She said to the Parish: *"Thank Our Lord for allowing me to stay with you for such a long time."* We were following Our Lady's call when we began to pray, but in praying we must deepen our prayer. If our prayer remains at lip level, mere words, then we are not doing Our Lord's Will and we are not following the invitation to prayer because Our Lady has said: *"with your heart."* This means allowing each word and sign to speak to you and move you. For example, in every Christian family there is a Cross, and the Cross is the Word of forgiveness, love, sacrifice, eternal life and a total abandonment to Our Lord; but so many times in our homes and communities we quarrel, do not forgive, do not seek for reconciliation and behave in an egoistic way. Let us ask ourselves: what significance does the Cross have for us then ? The Cross is the Word, but if we look at the Cross without feeling in our hearts what significance it has, we have interrupted our path to conversion. Conversion begins when the Word begins to mean something to us again. When Our Lady asks us for the rosary she is not just asking us to say one hundred and fifty Hail Mary's in half an hour or forty minutes, but wants us to become closer to the mysteries of the Redemption and the lives of Mary and Jesus. To become closer to the mysteries means finding a real stimulus in each mystery for our everyday life.

If you find yourself in a difficult situation today or tomorrow and you lose patience, why not stop for ten minutes and meditate on how Jesus carries His Cross, for example ? In this way, a real situation can bring us to, and speak to us of, Our Lord. If we lose patience because it is a difficult cross or situation to bear, we should find a short time for prayer, to look and meditate on how Jesus behaved and to find in the mysteries a solution to our problems. If we contemplate how Our Lady visited her cousin, Elizabeth, for example, what does this mean ? Our Lady sees a situation, the need, goes to help and brings joy. In contemplation this mystery, if I find the Will of Our Lord for me, for example, is to visit an ill person, it means that I am continuing to pray, that I have prayed and that The Word has spoken to me and moved me to go out and act on it. Prayer is not only a word to Our Lord but is life: prayer must become life and life must become prayer, so prayer becomes permanent prayer. If we link our work to our prayer and prayer to our work, we will receive inspiration in our prayer and our work will inspire us to pray. This is possible, but if we cannot achieve it today, it does not mean that we will not be able to do so in a month's time: we must begin as we are able. By eating an appetite comes, by praying prayer also comes. When Our Lady asked for seven Our Father's in the beginning, she has shown that she wants permanent prayer from us. Our Lady does not theorise about prayer but gives concrete advice suited to the people she is speaking to. To tell people here 'become closer to the mysteries of the Redemption' does not mean anything, but

to tell them to 'recite the rosary' means a great deal. It is in this way that we can recite the rosary all day and so start permanent prayer; this is the reason I did not tell you to find thirty minutes each day to say one hundred and fifty Hail Mary's, but to pray all day. Sometimes I say that every smoker finds time every now and then for a cigarette, so why should not every good Christian find time for prayer in certain circumstances during the day ? This is the prayer which is connected with my active life, but prayer has another dimension as well, an inner one, in my life with Our Lord. It is here that I receive the deep peace Our Lord wants to give me, peace for abandonment to Him, as He asked for in the Gospel of St. Matthew, 6, 24-34, as I have already told you.

(Fr. Slavko Barbaric 17th October 1984)