

***Pilgrims of Faith  
Marian Center  
(PFMC)***

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2/17/04

## **IVAN DRAGICEVIC INTERPRETED TALK BACKGROUND**

Ministries generally reserve a church or other public place of assembly from about 5:30 PM until about 10 PM in the evening for 15-20 decades of the Rosary starting at 6 PM, Holy Mass about 7 PM, followed by conclusion of the Rosary, and an interpreted talk by Ivan Dragicevic.

Daily, about 6:40 PM, no matter where he is in the world or in what time zone, Ivan is stopped in his prayer and blessed with an apparition of the GOSPA, the Blessed Virgin Mary, who has been teaching him since the first speaking apparition on 6/25/1981 in the parish of Saint James, Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ivan's talk centers on the messages of GOSPA particularly for the youth of the world.

Attached to this page is a collection of biographical and church / conference visiting information on Ivan Dragicevic taken from various web pages for which attribution is noted at the bottom of each article.

Ivan's speaking schedule is normally posted on the Internet site <http://www.medjugorje.org/ivanse.htm>. This schedule is updated as often as commitments are made from local churches / ministries who will host his interpreted talks.

The information sheet for Tuesday, 24 March 2004, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel (OLMC) Church in Berlin, NJ, is posted at: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2004/IVANOLMC3-23-04.pdf>.

The PFMC, Kathleen, Keith, and all the PFMC volunteers, have been blessed with the attention of both Bishop McHugh and Bishop DiMarzio to the PFMC ministries. Bishop McHugh was very favorable to Medjugorje and the fruits he saw in our ministry. He assigned Father William Hodge as our liaison within his duties with the Marian Commission. Bishop DiMarzio assigned Father Glenn Hartman to monitor our monthly periodical "The PILGRIM" and Father Joe Byerley as our Camden Diocese liaison.

If you need to have additional information, please visit: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith> or call (856) 768-9228. The Epiphany House of the PFMC, A Religious Association, Inc. at 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4963 is open daily from about 10 AM to about 5 PM if you would like to pay us a visit.

***Praised be Jesus and Mary, Now and Forever,***

**Kathleen and Keith Werner, Co-Directors**

## About Ivan Dragicevic and Family

Ivan is one of the six visionaries that our Blessed Mother began appearing to in Medjugorje on June 24, 1981.



He is one of the three remaining that still see her on a daily basis. Ivan's mission focuses on the youth and family. For the past 10 years he has traveled throughout the world bringing our Lady's messages to people from all walks of life. In Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Australia, Guam, Philippines, New Zealand, throughout Europe and the United States. He has met with Presidents, Royal Families, Ambassadors, Politicians, Sports Figures, Movie Stars, and the poorest of the poor. He has been able to bring our Lady's messages to people that will never be able to travel to Medjugorje. In 1994 he married Laureen Murphy, an American. They now divide their time living in America and Medjugorje.

### *Laureen and Ivan Dragicevic*

Ivan and Laureen have been blessed with three children. As a family the Dragicevics' welcome pilgrims into their home to share in what is called the Prayer Experience. It is a more intimate pilgrimage focusing on our Lady's messages for youth and family. The group becomes part of our family during their stay in Medjugorje. Having meals together with Ivan and his family, praying mornings and evenings together, and spending time laughing, talking and asking questions at the group meetings on the front porch.



### *Daughters Mikayla (1) and Kristina (5)*

The group partakes in all of the usual pilgrimage activities, visiting with Fr. Jozo and the other visionaries (when available), visiting Cennacolo, climbing Mt. Krizevac and Apparition Hill, and attending the services at St. James church. An experienced local tour guide, certified by the parish with years of experience, knowledge of the Messages of Medjugorje and the local history will accompany and translate for the group. Some events exclusive to Prayer Experience Pilgrims are Morning Prayer with Ivan in our private family chapel, daily rosary with Ivan, unlimited use of our home chapel, scheduled group meetings & personal meetings with Ivan, providing plenty of opportunities for you to ask questions, the group will climb to the Blue Cross with Ivan for meditation and prayers. And much more.....



### *Ivan shares with the group during Morning Prayer in our Private Home Chapel*

Ivan has been in our Blessed Mother's 'school of prayer' for 20 years now. He will share with the group his insight and knowledge about prayer with the heart, prayer in the family and our Lady's Message. . Our pilgrims have become a very special part of our lives. To witness the conversions that take place during their stay with us, to see families reunited, young people returning to the church, so many lives touched by the gentle message of our Mother, is truly an inspiration. Many have become our Lady's missionaries, returning home and spreading her message, the gospel message, as a shining example of God's love and peace. Let us open our hearts to our Lady's message of Peace, Prayer, Conversion, Penance, Strong Faith, Hope and Love. Return to God and one by one, we will bring peace to our troubled world.



### *The Dragicevic Family waiting to greet their pilgrims in front of their home in Medjugorje*

<http://www.pilgrimages.com/prayerexperience/about/default.htm>

## Parts of an Interview with Visionary Ivan Dragicevic

From the Medjugorje Newsletter, by Weible Columns

*Do you think it of vital importance how the visionaries lead their married lives?*

Undoubtedly, we know that the eyes of the world are upon us, and so we must be an example for others. We must show ourselves attending Holy Mass, receiving Holy Communion, praying together, and having time for one another. In short, living according to the wishes of Our Lady.

*Did the Gospa want you to get married and have a family?*

God and the Gospa left the possibility open for us to decide freely. We chose this path and with the help of our daily prayer, we hope to succeed in it.

*Do you intend to stay in Medjugorje or will you eventually go to the United States?*

My wife and I put in the forefront our work with youth. We will go where we are called. All things considered, I would prefer to remain in Medjugorje dedicated to being with the pilgrims experiencing Our Lady's messages to them.

*The Gospa speaks to you daily. Does She say anything special? Does She confide secrets to you or do you simply pray together?*

Our Lady tells me nothing special. We converse and pray together for peace and world conversion. The Gospa guides my path as a mother does. As surprising as it may seem, I can tell you without exaggeration that every apparition is a new and unique experience. Many times the pilgrims complain that the Gospa repeats so many times: "Pray, pray!" It's true, but every call to prayer is a new invitation. If Our Lady says: "My children are sleeping, but it is important that they awake", we must understand this as a new call. Every message contains something new and gives us a new opportunity to change ourselves and take a new road.

*The Gospa said, that the time of Her apparitions is a time rich in grace. Has She also said something about the coming of Jesus?*

I must keep quiet about many things, but it's true that this time is a time rich with graces. Every day is a grace, but we can only open ourselves to this grace through prayer. Without our prayers nothing will happen. It is equally important to live the messages. Nobody can be so presumptuous as to believe that peace is something natural. Peace is much more a grace that is given to us.

*Ivan, I ask you for a final word for our readers*

I think it is very important that we understand the heart of the messages. The Gospa also calls us to faith, love, conversion, prayer, fasting, and penitence. But these don't have to be empty words, if we will only give them life in our lives. I wish for all the friends of Medjugorje to find the strength to decide irrevocably for God and for prayer, just as the Gospa asks us. No one can judge anybody, but we must begin to work in ourselves for our own conversion. By our prayer and by our lives, each one of us must be a sign and thus become a missionary of Our Lady.

<http://www.medjugorje.org/ivan1.htm>



### **Our Lady Over New Orleans - An Account of Ivan Dragicevic's Talk at the Marian Conference, By Mimi R. Kelly**

Ever since the very first Marian-Medjugorje Conference, that The MIR Group coordinated back in 1990 we have been blessed to have as our poster logo the image of Our Lady over the city of New Orleans painted by local artist Sal Provenzano. This year through the grace of God the image was again a reality. Our Lady was truly over the city of New Orleans (metro New Orleans anyway).

The MIR Group held its 8<sup>th</sup> Marian Conference on the weekend of December 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>,

2001 and this time, Medjugorje came to us. The attendees were blessed to have visionary, Ivan Dragicevic, not only speak to them about the apparitions of Our Lady in Medjugorje, but also, assist in leading the Rosary and then, for all to witness, he had his apparition at center stage. Our Lady had again truly visited our fair city.

As Raymond Arroyo gave the announcements for the evening and informed the assembly that Ivan would have his apparition at 6:40PM, first a gasp, then a hush fell over the hall. Ivan had requested that the evening should begin with the Rosary, which he would assist by leading the second decade. As he began, "*Oce nas, koji jesi nas nebesima*" (*Our Father, who art in heaven*), you could just feel the excitement. A feeling as if you had just returned home. The Rosary continued until just before 6:40PM when Ivan arose and proceeded to center stage, where he knelt before the altar to await Our Lady. You could just feel the desire of everyone in the room to be in his shoes for even just a second, to see the Mother of God. Ivan nodded his head and spoke to her, though without sound, and then he seemed to raise his head as if to watch her leave; he remained in prayer momentarily and then he stood up and we knew that Our Lady had gone. Kitty Cleveland, then sang with the most angelic voice the Ave Maria for Our Blessed Mother, then Ivan continued.

Ivan's English is coming along quite well, but he's not yet confident enough to speak the message of Our Lady. Anka Lepetic, a local, who is originally from Croatia, was his interpreter.

He began his talk – "My dear friends, I am happy to be here to share the message of the last 20 years." He shared that as a mere youth of 16 he surely never dreamed that he would be chosen to be a visionary. He really didn't even know what that was. He realizes now that he is indeed an ambassador for Our Lady's message and prays everyday that he will do justice to her call. He reminded us that Our Lady's first message was a call to PEACE and that all of her messages are ultimately that same call to PEACE. Our Lady calls each of us to strive for holiness and that everyday must be a renewed commitment toward conversion.

"My dear, I'm not looking for the best", is the response which Our Lady gives to him when he asks, "Why?" "Why me?" He said that the Gospa chose him to be an instrument. One to be used to share with the world the message of PEACE – PRAYER – FASTING – PENANCE – STRONG FAITH – STRONG LOVE – and HOPE. He said we can't lose hope! Important in Our Lady's message is the message for prayer in the family. He said that through prayer, families can spiritually heal, then and only then can spiritual healing take place in the world.

Ivan said that Our Lady's message is not a message of doom and gloom. She doesn't come to tell us of the end of the world or the second coming of Christ. She comes as a mom of hope. She wants to give hope to the youth. She wants us to decide to walk with God; to make Holy Mass the center of our lives. She calls us to monthly Confession; Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; family Rosary; daily reading of the Bible. Our Lady says that the Bible is the spiritual food that we need to help us to forgive, love and help each other. Her message is for the whole world! It crosses ALL BOUNDARIES! He said that we are her children and she is a tireless mother who wishes to teach us to pray with our heart so that each time of prayer is an encounter with Jesus.

Ivan shared that his meetings with Our Lady are difficult to describe. There are no words to describe her beauty. His apparition on that evening was as follows. He said that she came happy. She said, "Praised be Jesus, my dear children." After which she prayed over everyone there with extended hands and she blessed everyone with her motherly blessing. He then recommended everyone to her and all their petitions. He said she then took the time to especially pray for peace. They then had a time of private conversation. Before she left they prayed the Our Father and the Glory Be together. Our Lady leaves in the sign of the light of the cross and says, "Go in peace, my dear children".

I hope that this account of Ivan's visit to New Orleans will bring back a joy of your Medjugorje experience, whether that experience was actually in Medjugorje or at a local Medjugorje gathering. May we never forget the hope and joy we've felt in our hearts through Our Lady's apparitions in Medjugorje.

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<http://www.themirgroup.org/devotions/ourladyoverneworleans.htm>

## **An Evening with Medjugorje visionary Ivan**

On November 26, 2000, Ivan was the guest speaker at Saint Thomas of Villanova Church, in Wilmington, MA.

The evening started singing Hail Mary Gentle Woman. This was followed by reciting the Joyful and Sorrowful mysteries. The Eucharistic Liturgy was by Celebrant, Father Phillip B. Earley, pastor of St. Thomas. The Liturgy Readings were, 1st, Daniel 7:13-14 and 2nd, Revelations 1:5-8. The Gospel Acclamation was, John 18:33-37. Several songs were songs throughout the Mass.

After the Mass was the Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The Church smelled heavy with the fragrance of frankincense and we all recited, O Saving Victim and Down in Adoration Falling. This was followed by Benediction and Divine Praises.

Father Giordano Bellanich, OFM, Croatian Relief USA, was to be the translator. Father flew in from New Jersey but due to a plane delay was not there when Ivan was to speak. So in a rare and unusual event Ivan spoke in English. He did well with his English.

Ivan started off by telling us that he is not a saint. He made this very clear saying, he does not understand why Our Lady picked him. He went on to discuss the first days of the apparition in Medjugorje, starting on June 24, 1981.

Ivan was on his way home from playing soccer, when Vicka called him from a distance saying, "Come and see Our Lady." Ivan went but being very shy, upon seeing Our Lady, he quickly ran for home locking himself in his room, asking himself, "Why should I see these things?"

Ivan also makes account that in the following first days of the apparitions, he and the other visionaries were transported over bushes and brush to the apparition site. There standing on a cloud the Blessed Mother was holding the baby Jesus. She motioned the Medjugorje children saying, "Come closer, do not be afraid."

Ivan goes on to tell us about the requests that Our Lady makes of often. These are the messages we have heard over and over, prayer, fasting, peace, penance and reconciliation. I will share only a few points as so much was discussed it is difficult to retain it all.

### Prayer

Ivan tells us we must pray from the hearts. He say's, "Do not look at your watch worrying what time it is when praying. When you pray, seek deep prayer, through such prayer we receive grace."

### Note:

So many times Our Lady of Medjugorje, in Her messages, has said, "Pray, till prayer becomes joy." Scripture tell us also that we access gifts from God, or grace. St. Teresa of Avila tells us in one of her writings, ..."Whoever makes a habit of prayer...will be favored by God's greatest gift and will make the quickest progress in the interior life." Sister Teresa goes on to add, "Do not imagine there are other secrets. All our good consists in this."

### Fasting:

Ivan say's that fasting on bread and water is best, but notes that not everyone can fast in this way. Some are sick, and some have a difficult time offering such a sacrifice. In these cases, he suggest we offer another type of sacrifice. He gave examples such as, cigarettes, alcohol, and sweets.

### Family:

Ivan makes some points on family that I believe we should all take time to consider. He mentions that in the world today there seems to be so little time. Parents are always working and there is no quality time spend with the children. He asks the families to find time to pray together. He asks families to read Scripture together and to pray the Rosary together. This he say's will bring a family closer and create a good bonding and devotion.



Some Questions for Ivan that evening.

Q: You said you have seen the Blessed Mother holding the baby Jesus, have you ever seen the adult Jesus?

A: No, I have only seen the baby Jesus

Q: Father Slavko recently passed away on Nov. 24th, was he the priest who was chosen to release the secrets in the parchment?

A: No, Father Peter in Medjugorje is the chosen priest to release the secrets.

Q: In Our Lady's message on Oct. 25th, 2000 she talks about a "New Spring," what does this mean?

A: Our Lady is talking about the Spirit of a person, like in springtime when everything starts to grow. We need to be like a new spring. We need to grow in the Spirit.

Q: Do all the visionaries receive the message on the 25th?

A: No, only Maria.

Q: Could you tell us about the book Vicka was instructed to write and when it will be published?

A: Vicka has been told the life of Our Lady, she has written a book about it as Our Lady's has requested. The book will not be published until Our Lady say's that Vicka is to publish it.

Q: Have you seen both the visions of Heaven and hell?

A: I have only seen the vision of Heaven, I did not want to see the vision of hell.

Q: There is talk that Vicka is very sick, can you tell us anything about this?

A: I talked with Vicka 3 days ago, she was happy. She has gone to Italy for some tests.

Q: Are you and the other visionaries still close.

A: Yes we are still close.

Here Ivan goes on to tell us about the passing of Father Slavko. Many of us already knew this as this information quickly circulated throughout the world. Ivan says, "when Father Slavko reached the top of Cross Mountain, he was having chest pain. Father went to sit on a rock, shortly after he died."

Note:

In an interview with C. Margaret Sims, (retired nun) founder of Marian Messengers, Framingham, MA. She said that Father Slavko was despondent and did not seem to be aware of what was going on around him, when sitting on the rock.

The current information out of Medjugorje as of Nov. 27, 2000 suggests that Father Slavko slipped, fell, and had a heart attack. With this current information, it seems that Father was in fact experiencing the effects of a heart attack before his slip and fall.

Apparition that evening Ivan tells us that during the apparition Our Lady was happy to see us all there. She came with angels. She wore a blue gown, white veil, dark hair, with blue eyes. She was very beautiful. Our Lady extended Her arms to all in the Church. She blessed everyone and also all religious items.

Ivan say's, "It is difficult for me to visit with my Lady." He say's, "After 19 years it is still very difficult to spend time with Our Lady, when you see a piece of Heaven, it is very hard to return to this world."

We ended this blessed evening with a few songs and proceed to the Church basement for refreshments. Ivan joined us for awhile and talked with anyone who approached him, shaking hand, answering some question and filling requests. Ivan was very friendly and down to earth.

On a personal note I would like to thank the Parish of St. Thomas, priests and lay people, for making me feel so welcomed and part of their parish family. They clearly worked very hard to make this a very special evening for all that attended. It was a blessed night for all.

Written by Michael K. Jones, Webmaster Medjugorje USA

<http://www.medjugorjeusa.org/eveningivan.htm>

## **Discernment and Scientific Study of the Visionaries in Medjugorje from the Medjugorje Star.**

Michael W. Petrides has done extensive study in brain laterality and visual perception research at the Institute of Living, and has doctoral training in clinical psychology at St. Louis University. He currently directs the Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic's mental health services for Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut. The following is from his commentary that appeared in *The Catholic Transcript*, September 10, 1993:

It is extremely noteworthy that the reported apparitions in Medjugorje are the first apparitions in history to be thoroughly investigated by science. Professor Henri Joyeaux headed a team from the University of Montpellier, France. Dr. Frigerio and colleagues from Italy did further investigation. The regularity of the apparitions has made for consistent and extremely reliable findings.

Five alleged visionaries tested were found to simultaneously look at precisely the same spot (even though no reference point was visible) within one-fifth of a second of each other when the Blessed Virgin Mary allegedly appears. Such synchronization can only be explained by some external "object" holding their gaze -- but one which those around them could not see.

During the same one-fifth of a second, there are simultaneous kneeling and the cessation of eye movements. There is no eye movement during the entire apparition (from 3 to 45 minutes). There is also the simultaneous raising of their heads and gazing upwards while remaining fixated on a spot moving upwards when the apparition is finishing.

Two of the alleged visionaries do not blink at all during the apparition. The eyeball normally dries when there is no regular blinking (15-20 times a minute) to moisten the cornea, but lacrimal secretion does not seem necessary during the apparition. The other alleged visionaries blink about half the normal rate. None of them blinks in response to touching the eye during the apparition (cornea sensitivity to varying pressures is completely absent), although they blink normally at other times.

There is no reaction to pain during the apparition. When touched with an algometer, which causes a cutaneous lesion or skin burn, there was complete absence of sensitivity. The alleged visionaries react normally to pain at other times.

The interesting results of a hearing test before and during an apparition showed normal hearing, but during the apparition, an input of ninety decibels (equivalent to a loud explosion) showed NO reaction. Auditory evoked potential measurement (electrical activity of the ear) indicates normal ear activity with no transmission to the inner ear during the apparition. It is a measurable inhibition of hearing that is involuntary and inexplicable physiologically.

Electroencephalographic (EEG) tests confirm that the alleged visionaries' brain functioning is normal and healthy. EEG tests rule out the possibility of epilepsy or psychotic hallucinations. The alleged visionaries are not asleep or dreaming either. Hysterical neurotic reaction or pathological ecstasy is also ruled out by the EEG testing.

What EEG testing showed was that before the apparition, the brain waves are predominantly beta rhythm interspersed by alpha rhythm (normal conscious attentiveness). At the start of the apparition, the beta rhythm remains for a short time and then is replaced by an almost uninterrupted alpha rhythm. Alpha rhythm is most often observed during relaxation, in a state of expectation, or engaged in meditation. It also usually requires practice to achieve such a diffuse response. Because most of the brain is devoted to visual processing, it is noteworthy that the alpha rhythm over the entire cranium was exhibited while the alleged visionaries had their eyes wide open throughout the apparition. Closed eyes would be expected with alpha rhythm because visual stimulation usually produces interference with alpha rhythm.

To test visual stimulation further, a 1000 watt light bulb was placed in front of the eyes of the alleged visionaries during the apparition. Not only is a 1000 watt light bulb usually painful to the eye but also it would normally cause increased blinking and influence alpha rhythm. There was no blinking movement of the eyelids to the 1000 watt stimulus. There was an interesting pupillary response. The pupil contracted as one would expect in bright light but there was no change in alpha rhythm to the 1000 watt light. This is scientifically

inexplicable and never seen before. FOR THE PUPIL TO RESPOND, THE BRAIN MUST REGISTER THE LIGHT BUT NO BRAIN WAVE CHANGE TOOK PLACE. Additionally, such intense stimulation normally causes a significant cortical response, but none occurred during the apparition period.

During the apparition period, another scientifically inexplicable event takes place. The alleged visionaries voices stop during the time that they are having the vision. Even though all the muscles involved in speech continue (all mouth, jaw and throat muscles), the larynx (voice box) shuts off. This is physically impossible. The laryngeal function cannot be physically isolated from the rest of the muscles of speech. The larynx ceases to emit sound during the apparition -- except for one exception. In unison, during the apparition the alleged visionaries will be heard simultaneously praying, "Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name..." When asked, they report Mary is leading them in the Lord's Prayer.

In summary, the unique aspects of the results of the scientific investigations point to the conclusion that nothing in the physical realm is allowed to interfere with the apparition experience. Scientific experts have defined the phenomena " as a state of active, intense prayer, partially disconnected from the external world, a state of contemplation with a separate person whom they alone can see, hear, and touch."

The current attitude of the church after fourteen years of scrutiny is a kind of provisional approval. Both the Pope and the former Bishops are treating and nurturing Medjugorje as a legitimate place of pilgrimage. Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II strongly believes in the fruits of Medjugorje. In response to thanks for what he did to free Poland from communism he has said, "NO, NOT ME, BUT BY THE WORKS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN ACCORDING TO HER AFFIRMATIONS AT FATIMA AND MEDJUGORJE." He also said "MEDJUGORJE IS THE FULFILLMENT AND CONTINUATION OF FATIMA." American Church leaders would do well to offer the same kind of provisional approval and pastoral assistance to those experiencing conversion through Medjugorje.

Anna Yeseta

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<http://www.medjugorje.org/science.htm>