

October 17, 2008

Dear parents,

Thank you so much for all your prayers during the time I was on my pilgrimage to Medjugorje. The experience was one that I'll always treasure and I feel totally inadequate trying to express to you the many blessings that are available. Mary has been appearing on a daily basis to the visionaries for 27 years and the messages she gives us are so special. As she says, this is a special time of grace for all of us, if we just take advantage of it.

Next week we will be presenting a PowerPoint presentation to all the students in the school about the trip and they will be receiving a gift that has been blessed that includes a message from Mary. In that message, she encourages us to do five things:

1. Pray from the heart: rosary
2. Eucharist
3. Holy Bible
4. Fasting
5. Monthly confession

My purpose in writing to you is to share the wonderful experience of being in Medjugorje with you and to also explain the significance of the card that your child will be receiving. As I mentioned, it has been blessed at the altar in Medjugorje and as such should be treated as a religious article. Please encourage the children to place it someplace special. While Mary is encouraging us to do the five things listed above, I can assure you that she wants us to grow to this level gradually. When she introduced each of the five concepts to the visionaries, she did them one at a time, adding steps as they were ready to take on a new one. My suggestion is that as parents you make this a religious goal for yourselves and your family. Perhaps dedicate yourself to one of these areas until it becomes a habit and then gradually take on another one. Some of these can be difficult for children, but if they see you performing the tasks they will be much more likely to follow your habits and do them also. Something like fasting on bread and water on Wednesdays and Fridays as Mary has encouraged us to do may not be appropriate for young children due to dietary needs. Perhaps they could give up desserts on those days as a sacrifice.

My hope is that this letter, the cards that the children will receive and the PowerPoint presentations that we are giving will encourage you and your family to look at how you can come closer to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. At some point, I will be presenting the power point at the Wednesday Parish Night at St. Catherine sometime in the near future. Watch for the date to be announced.

My best wishes to each of you as we continue on this journey together, growing closer to Christ.

Dave Schlachter