

John Cornwell and his investigation into the alleged visions of Medjugorje

Has the Virgin Mary, under the title of Our Lady, Queen of Peace been appearing in Medjugorje in the former Yugoslavia since 1981? Six young people have reported these visions and have been subjected to tests.

The authenticity or otherwise of the apparitions is a matter of great debate in the Catholic Church.

In *Powers of Darkness, Powers of Light*, the intelligent and sceptical John Cornwell reveals some interesting things about his experience of Medjugorje.

He related the story of a priest who made one of the visionaries blink during the apparition and who ceased to believe in it (50).

Lie-detector tests show that the visionaries were not lying (51). But by pretending that the lies are true and that you believe them you can get around these tests.

The only thing that was found strange by the doctors was the larynxes being used and making no sound and the children looking up and coming out of the apparent ecstasy at the same time (51). Stage magicians could explain all this. Doctors understandably cannot. This conflicts with the Laurentin and Joyeux book that there are more wonders than just the soundless voices. When doctors cannot agree we should listen to the most sceptical ones.

A lot of devotees have fantasised stories such as many being kissed by the Virgin and their rosaries turning to real gold.

Cornwell noticed that when one stopped speaking the other would begin during the ecstasy (76). I think that that should be taken as evidence for the visionaries counting the seconds to create the simultaneous ecstasy effect. It could be a coincidence. When one stops speaking surely the Virgin will answer her or him so there is something wrong when another starts when one stops. The communications are about spiritual problems: the children asking the Virgin for her advice and receiving it. Intelligently, he tells us that coming out of hypnosis or hallucination wipes the memory of what one did or experienced in it is long disproved (79). It says a lot about those experts who use the memory of the children as proof that they are not hypnotised or hallucinating. "The forces and laws of hypnotism are powerful, extraordinarily flexible and deeply mysterious, although hardly in a mystical sense" (79). Everybody's nervous system is different and affected by different things and we do not understand very much about hypnosis. Some experts will find that they are not hypnotised on grounds that would not be acceptable to other experts. Some experts believe that alpha is a hypnotic state.

Vicka told Cornwell that a child's dirty hand stained the Virgin's veil. This is an absolute impossibility when science says that there is no tangible being there. The Church would hold that the apparition body if it appears there would be very different from normal bodies and people could pass through it like there was nothing there just like Jesus was able to behave like a ghost despite being a body after his resurrection.

Vicka said that the Lady was preceded by a light in the first series of visions. That would be good if they could not look up and go into ecstasy at the same time. She said that on occasion the Lady would appear as soon as they made the sign of the cross (102). The sign was the trigger. No true scientist could use science as a reason to believe in the apparitions.

Vicka claims that she and Jacov were literally taken bodily to Heaven which only the most credulous could absorb (103). It is convenient that Jacov's mother was out at the time. The Lady took her and Jacov by the hand and they reached Heaven quickly. This gives the impression that they flew there very fast. But why couldn't she take them there without them traversing the space between earth and Heaven?

Her Hell sounds naïve and medieval with people having horns there. Fr Svet explained that the Lord reveals difficult truths to the simple in ways they can grasp so her vision of it was not exactly as it was (104). But if Hell is something more abstract than that why could God not show them a black space and let them feel how you feel in Hell just for a moment? That way there would be no danger of misunderstanding. Fr Svet is making excuses for Vicka. God would tell the visionaries if the vision was figurative. The visionaries are making themselves look unintelligent for they believe the lady when she says she is the Queen of Peace and how can she be when her God that she wants us to become subject to in all things is to blame for people going to Hell for he could prevent us having full consent to sin so that mortal sin would be impossible and without mortal sin he cannot send us to Hell forever. He could make us a bit retarded in that area but give us trustworthy faculties in everything else.

CONCLUSION

There is no good or reasonable or scientific evidence that Mary is appearing at Medjugorje. The fact that people with bad motives and proclivities were involved in showing she was appearing shows she was in fact was not.

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To Order Understanding Medjugorje visit <http://www.theotokos.org.uk> or write to Theotokos Books, PO Box, 8570, Nottingham, England

Videos

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DIVINE OR DECEIVED? COVER-UP, Network 5 International, 1998

Contact:

Network 5 International
PO Box 51
Liverpool
L69 3EE

A critical look at...

the "apparitions" of the Virgin Mary in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Since 1981, the Virgin Mary, reportedly, has been appearing to six young Croats during daily ecstasies which last several minutes. Millions of pilgrims have responded to the Lady of Medjugorje, the young visionaries, and the Franciscans who lead the parish there. What exactly has happened?

From a unique vantage point---he is both a Franciscan priest and a native son of Medjugorje---the author of this book exposes contradictions and falsehoods that have been omitted or intentionally concealed until now. He introduces us to the group of visionaries, makes known and explains the Church's teachings on Marian apparitions, and comments on exceptional and previously unpublished material (in appendices) which allows a thorough examination of the roots of these events. He scrutinizes the role of Medjugorje's Franciscans and the Bishop's interventions, as well as those of the Commission of inquiry set up to evaluate the whole question. He also provides an update of the recent events in Medjugorje and attempts to explain the so-called apparitions. Finally, the theologian urges readers to draw their own conclusions as to whether it is still possible to believe in the Madonna's presence and action.

Father Ivo Sivric was born in Medjugorje in 1917. After completing his studies in philosophy and theology in Mostar, he was ordained in 1941, and then went on to complete his postgraduate studies in Zagreb and Rome where he received his doctorate in Sacred Theology in 1947. Father Sivric emigrated to the United States, taught at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, and has also written several works, including Bishop J. G. Strossmayer - New Light on Vatican I (1975), The Peasant Culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1982), both published by the Franciscan Herald Press in Chicago, and Temeljni krscanstva C.S. Lewisa [The Christian Basics According to C.S. Lewis] (1988), published by Teoloska Biblioteka in Sarajevo. After becoming a U.S. citizen, Father Sivric made eight extended trips to Medjugorje. He served as director of Croatian Franciscan Publications and he worked as a parochial vicar of a parish serving the Roman Catholic Croats in St. Louis, Missouri. Father Ivo Sivric passed away October 28, 2002, at age 85.

The author of the prospective Volume II (Observations of an anomalist) visited Medjugorje, filmed the visionaries during four of their «ecstasies» and explored various physical and psychological hypotheses to explain both the luminous phenomena and visions as not supernaturally caused. He illustrates the sequences of a spontaneous test done during an «apparition» and analyses their consequences. He invokes the testimony of critical witnesses, as well as the opinion and work of expert specialists. From the matrix of his special interest in altered states of consciousness, he proposes his own experimental counteranalysis of the «scientific and medical studies.» For example, an «ordinary» student is shown doing a laboratory reproduction of the «ecstatic electrophysiological parameters» identical to those recorded in the young Yugoslavian visionaries. Important sociopolitical, ecclesiastical, and economic factors, as well as the high stakes for Marian propagandists and the overt manipulation are introduced and explored. In all, Louis Bélanger provides readers with a complete overview of Medjugorje's apparent anomaly: on a fine June day in 1981, two teenaged girls, moved by the sincerest hopes, incited a collective drama which has drawn millions of believers in search of tangible expressions of the spiritual dimension.

Louis Bélanger was born in Québec City in 1941. After his studies in political science at Laval University, he pursued his research in the fields of psychology and parapsychology at Freiburg University in Germany. Since 1975, he has been conducting the study of paranormal phenomena at the University of Montréal's Faculty of Theology. He has also written Psi, au-delà de l'occultisme [Psi: Beyond the Occult], published by Québec-Amérique, and has presided over film-lectures of the motion picture version throughout Québec, Europe, and French speaking African countries. He has been scientific consultant and researcher for the production of 55 film documentaries on paranormal phenomena and controversies in science. Louis Bélanger is the editor of The Hidden Side of Medjugorje.

To order The Hidden Side of Medjugorje, 419 pages, including 16 original transcripts - ISBN 2-921010-01-1, please enclose a money order for CAD\$ 40. (\$ 25.00 + \$ 15.00 for Express/Priority postage & handling to the U.S.A. (including Internet tracking and insurance - 3 to 4 days to come in) payable to PSILOG INC., 465 Notre-Dame, Saint-François-du-Lac, (Québec) Canada JOG 1MO.

THE WEB

SCIENTIFIC STUDIES DONE ON THE VISIONARIES OF MEDJUGORJE – 1998 SCIENTIFIC STUDY ON THE VISIONARIES

www.childrenofmedjugorje.com/medj/research.htm

AN OVERVIEW OF THE MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC TESTING OF VISIONARY NANCY FOWLER CONYERS GEORGIA

<http://members.aol.com/bbu84/biblicalstupidity/science.htm#10>

DISCERNMENT AND SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF VISIONARIES FROM THE MEDJUGORJE STAR

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