

The Latest on the Visionaries

Vicka Ivankovic - Vicka is the oldest of the visionaries. She was born September 3, 1964, in Bijakovici, and comes from a family of 8 children. Her prayer mission given by Our Lady is to pray for the sick. Our Lady appeared to her for the first time on June 24, 1981. For her, the daily apparitions have not yet stopped. Our Lady has so far confided nine secrets to her.



Vicka married on January 26, 2002, and lives with her husband Mario in the small village of Gruda, a few kilometres north of Medjugorje. Vicka and Mario are expecting their first child in January 2003.

Here is a short interview with Vicka about her marriage:

Vicka is of medium height and thin. She has sparkling eyes and a wonderful smile. She simply radiates love through her constant smile. She is filled with energy and has tirelessly spoken with pilgrims in Medjugorje for over 21 years.

Vicka: *"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 began, in January 1983, to tell me Her life story, which took over two years."*

The information Our Lady dictated to Vicka over these two years is contained in two hand written notebooks and will be published when Our Lady tells Vicka it is time.

Mirjana Dragicevic-Soldo - Mirjana was born March 18th, 1965 in Sarajevo. Her prayer mission from Our Lady is to pray for all unbelievers. She is the second oldest of the seers. Very intelligent, Mirjana graduated from the University of Sarajevo where her family lived.



Mirjana was the second to see the Blessed Mother that day, June 24th in Medjugorje. Although her family lived in Sarajevo, she spent the summers with her grandmother who lived in Bijakovici. That is how she came to be in Medjugorje that summer. She had daily apparitions from June 24, 1981 till December 25, 1982. On this date, Mirjana received her 10th and final secret from Our Lady. Mirjana was the first seer to receive all 10 secrets.

Since that time, Our Lady only appeared to Mirjana once a year on her birthday (March 18) until August 2, 1987 when Our Lady also started appearing to Mirjana on the 2nd day of each month to pray with Mirjana for all unbelievers. Mirjana tells us that Our Lady defines "unbelievers" as those who have not yet felt God's love. She tells us that if we only once saw the tears in Our Lady's eyes for all unbelievers that we would all begin praying intensely for this intention.

These special meetings with Our Lady are sometimes apparitions and sometimes locations. Mirjana's 2nd of the month meetings with Our Lady used to be something very private. Not even her own family was with her during these visits with Our Lady. Mirjana always locked herself into her room and started praying. On January 2, 1997, Our Lady told Mirjana that from February 2, 1997 onward, her apparitions would be public. Our Lady invites all to join them in prayer on this 2nd day of each month for unbelievers. For those fortunate enough to be in Medjugorje on the 2nd of the month, you can join Mirjana for this apparition, which is usually held in the Cenacolo community in Medjugorje.

Mirjana is living in the parish of Medjugorje and is married to Marko Soldo who she knew since they were children. They have two daughters and meet with pilgrims often when they are in Medjugorje. Mirjana also helps out with many orphans at the orphanage in Medjugorje since the war.

Mirjana: *"I didn't know Marian apparitions existed. I never heard about Lourdes or Fatima. The first day Ivanka had the vision of Our Lady, she was full of enthusiasm and wanted me to look too. I thought: "This can't be real!" But, Our Lady gave us strength to accept Her as a Mother. I've changed a lot. I realise how empty my heart was. Now, I truly feel God, the Mother of God, and the faith. My relationship with Our Lady has become one of a mother and daughter. Jesus is like a friend, or an older brother. Whoever believes in God, and opens himself up to God, needn't be afraid. God will be with him in the future too. If everyone believed in God, there'd be no war."*

Marija Pavlovic-Lunetti - Marija is the third oldest member of the group. She was born on April 1, 1965, in Bijakovici. Her prayer mission given by Our Lady is to pray for all the souls in purgatory. She has three brothers and two sisters. When the apparitions started, she was studying in Mostar which is about eighteen miles away.



She is of average height and thin. Marija is most serene and deeply spiritual. She is a retiring and unobtrusive person. Those who

know her describe her as "just beautiful" because of her deep spirituality, prayerfulness, and humility.

Our Lady appeared to her for the first time on June 25, 1981. She still has apparitions every day, and is the visionary to whom Our Lady gives the public message to the world on the 25th of each month. Our Lady has confided nine secrets to her so far. Marija is presently living in Italy, is married, and has four children. She visits Medjugorje a number of times each year.

Marija: *"Everything has changed in Medjugorje. People started to pray and listen to Our Lady's messages. Before, I didn't pray enough. Now I want to pray more and more. I'm sure God gives much to everyone who's open to prayer. I tell people they should pray more, and Our Lady will give them peace in all that burdens them. It's not I, it's Our Lady who urges us to nurture prayer, to propagate peace, and to fast. She says that everyone who comes to Medjugorje, must be converted. They must encourage other people too, to pray and fast. God wishes us to pray and fast. God wishes to develop the parish and make it grow more and more in faith. If people accept the messages, God will lead them."*

Ivanka Ivankovic-Elez - Ivanka was the first to see Our Lady on June 24, 1981, and is the youngest of the 4 girls and was born on July 21, 1966, in Bijakovici. Ivanka's prayer mission from Our Lady is to pray for families. Ivanka has one brother and one sister. Her mother Jagoda, died in May 1981. When the apparitions first began, Ivanka asked the Blessed Mother about her mother. Our Lady told her that her mother was with her in heaven. God has allowed Ivanka to see and speak to her mother, who is in heaven, five times over the years.



She had daily apparitions from June 24, 1981, until May 7, 1985. On that day Our Lady confided to her the last of her ten secrets. Our Lady told her that for her entire life she will have an apparition every year on June 25, the anniversary of the apparitions. And so far it has been just that way. Ivanka is living in the parish of Medjugorje, is married and has three children.

Ivanka: *"When the apparitions began, I was only a child. I prayed and went to church when my parents asked me to. Now when I pray, I feel united with God and Our Lady. Before, when I went to Mass, I didn't feel anything special. Now, I know God is alive at the Holy Mass and gives Himself completely to us in the Host. Concerning my own future, I leave it completely to God - my path will go in the direction God leads me. I have some advice*

for young people: I want to tell them to turn to God as soon as possible because He's the only one who can lead them to happiness and truth. We simply must pray more and live the messages of Medjugorje."

Ivan Dragicevic - Ivan is the oldest of the two boys who see Our Lady and was born on May 25th, 1965 in Bijakovici. His prayer mission given by Our Lady is to pray for priests and the youth of the world. There are three younger children in his family and although Ivan and Mirjana share the same last name, they are not related.



Our Lady has appeared to him every day since June 24, 1981. Our Lady to date has confided nine secrets to Ivan. He is now married and resides half the year in the parish of Medjugorje, and half the year in Boston, MA. Ivan and his wife Laureen have three children.

Ivan: "The apparitions made a big difference in my life - the difference between heaven and earth. For example, I arrange my day now so that even during the day I find time to pray. Before, my life had no meaning. Now, I'm filled with inner contentment. The first time I saw Our Lady, a change occurred in my soul, and in my heart. Before, I often avoided prayer, but

now the difference is so great, I really can't describe it. I'm no longer sorry that Our Lady revealed my future. I'm confident and not afraid, because I know who leads me, and therefore, I'm not afraid of death. People in our parish, and all people, should feel that way."

Jakov Colo - Jakov is the youngest of the seers. He was born on March 6, 1971 in Bijakovici, and was only 10 years old when the apparitions started. His prayer mission given by Our Lady is to pray for the sick. Jakov's mother Jaca, died on September 5th 1983 and it affected Jakov very deeply since he rarely saw his father who worked in Germany as many men did in those days with no jobs available in Medjugorje or the surrounding area.



He has had daily apparitions since June 25, 1981, and on September 12, 1998, Our Lady confided to him his 10th secret. Our Lady now appears to Jakov only once per year on Christmas Day. Our Lady literally raised Jakov since his mother died when he was so young. It was very difficult for him to accept that he would no longer see Our Lady every day. He wondered how he would continue, and struggled for months until he tells us that through prayer he realized that he was now like all of

us who do not see Our Lady. He tells us that Our Lady is with each one of us always, and we can experience her in our hearts. Jakov lives in the parish of Medjugorje, is married and now has two children.

In the early years, the presence of the young fidgety boy among the group of seers is special in terms of the authenticity of the apparitions. It was highly improbable that he would come to church for two to three hours of prayer every single day, in winter as well as in summer, in bad weather as well as in good, and for well over three years, simply to make believe that he is seeing the Blessed Virgin.

Jakov: "From the time Our Lady first appeared to me, my life has entirely changed. Now, I pray more and go to Mass every evening. I try, more and more, to fulfil the messages that Our Lady gives us. I feel I'm closer to God now. I believe we have to pray that God's plans will be realized. I now want to live as a Christian. I begin the day with prayer, then go to school. when I get home, I help wherever necessary. To me, the Mass means an encounter with the living God. Our Lady always tells us to pray more."

(Please note that all the photos in this article are of the visionaries at the beginning of the apparitions- Ed)

FUNNY HOW WE CAN OVERLOOK

Did you see where Billy Graham's daughter was being interviewed on the Early Show a few days ago about the September 11th terrorist attack and Jane Clayson asked her:

"How could God let something like this happen?"

Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful response. She said:

"I believe that God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman that He is, I believe that He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand that He leave us alone?"

Let's see, I think it started when Madeline Murray O'Hare (she was murdered, her body was found recently) complained she didn't want any prayer in our schools, and we said OK.

Then, someone said you better not read the Bible in school... The Bible that says thou shall not kill; thou shall not steal; and love your neighbour as yourself. And we said, OK.

Then, Doctor Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Doctor Spock's son committed suicide).

An expert should know what he's talking about so we said "OK".

Then, someone said teachers and principals better not discipline our children when they misbehave. And the school administrators said no faculty member in this school better touch a student when they misbehave because we don't want any bad publicity, and we surely don't want to be sued. (There's a big difference between disciplining and touching, beating, smacking, humiliating, kicking, etc.) And we said, "OK".

Then someone said, let's let our daughters have abortions if they want, and they won't even have to tell their parents. And we said, "OK".

Then some wise school board member said, since boys will be boys and they're going to do it anyway, let's give our sons all the condoms they want, so they can have all the fun they desire, and we won't have to tell their parents they got them at school. And we said, "OK".

Then some of our top elected officials said it doesn't matter what we do in private as long as we do our jobs. And agreeing with them, we said it doesn't matter to me what anyone, including the President, does in private as long as I have a job and the economy is good.

And then the entertainment industry said, let's make TV shows and movies that promote profanity, violence, and illicit sex. And let's record music that encourages rape, drugs, murder, suicide, and satanic themes. And we said it's just entertainment, it has no adverse effect, and nobody takes it seriously anyway, so go right ahead.

Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves.

Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with "WE REAP WHAT WE SOW." Then there was the student who wrote:

"Dear God, Why didn't you save the little girl killed in her classroom?" Sincerely, Concerned Student...

AND THE REPLY

"Dear Concerned Student, I am not allowed in schools".

Sincerely, God.

Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell.

Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says.

Funny how everyone wants to go to heaven provided they do not have to believe, think, say, or do anything the Bible says.

Funny how someone can say "I believe in God" but still follow Satan who, by the way, also "believes" in God.

Funny how we are quick to judge, but not to be judged.

Funny how someone can be so fired up for Christ on Sunday, but be an invisible Christian the rest of the week.

Funny ! Are you laughing yet??

(Fran M. Nicastrì) From "The Pilgrim", USA