

# Pilgrimages & Travel

## Medjugorje moves pilgrims 'deeper into faith'

By Kathleen Schwar  
Staff writer

Every time Donald Dwello's bus or car turns onto the main street of Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, he said, "Something comes over me; I'm in another world, it's like I'm on fire. I get chills talking about it even now."

And since the first of his 58 visits, in 1987, Dwello, of St. Mary's Parish in Waterloo, has made it his business to take as many others as possible to the pilgrimage site.

"I do it for the Blessed Mother, at least I try to," he said. "I promised her from day one as long as one person wanted to go, I would do everything to get them there."

It was just 15 years ago next June that six children reported that Mary had appeared to them in Medjugorje and began revealing 10 secrets about world events. Mary continues appearing to them wherever they are, at 5:40 p.m. local time, Dwello said. When pilgrims go to Mass at St. James Church in Medjugorje, they always pause at that time during the rosary.

Mary also reportedly appears to some of the pilgrims who travel to Medjugorje.

On the second of Beverly Galtieri's five trips to Medjugorje, for example, she reported, "I saw the Blessed Mother floating into the tower of St. James Church. She was all in white." She saw this just five or six minutes before the apparition appeared to local visionaries at 5:40 p.m. in the village church, she added.

Although she didn't have any particular expectations, Galtieri, a Liverpool resident, admitted, "The first time people go, there is kind of a curiosity there. Every 10 seconds you're looking at your rosary to see if it's gold. ... The second and third times you just want to be in the church."

"Medjugorje brought us deeper into our Roman Catholic faith," she added. "If more than 20 million people have been to Medjugorje, the fruits of Medjugorje are very, very good for us."

The fruits she sees in her own life and her husband Pat's include four prayer groups they have started. And neither has missed a Mass since their first Medjugorje pilgrimage Feb. 12, 1989. The two also are



Courtesy of Donald Dwello

Pilgrims visiting Medjugorje can attend St. James Church for veneration, confession and worship all day.

opening a prayer house in Constantia they plan to offer free of charge for retreats.

All because of Medjugorje (which means "between the mountains"). Events there have been called anything from "collective hallucination," by a local bishop who appointed investigators, to "supernatural inspiration," by an archbishop of the former Yugoslavia.

To spread the word about Medjugorje, several residents of Canandaigua joined in 1986 to form the Queen of Peace Apostolate, which has since moved to Auburn. Dwello became independent tour coordinator for the apostolate. Its spiritual director is a co-founder, Father Al-

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