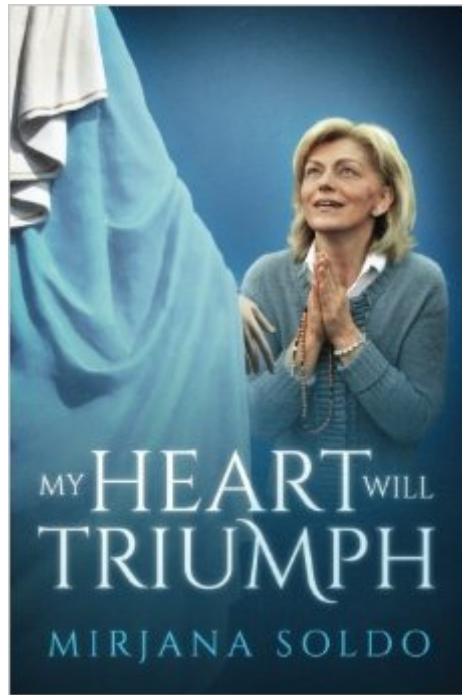


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My Heart Will Triumph



Synopsis

Mirjana Soldo was only sixteen years old when she and five other children saw a mysterious woman on a hillside near the village of Medjugorje, ex-Yugoslavia. The woman "who possessed an extraordinary beauty and grace" identified herself as the Virgin Mary. The events that began on that summer afternoon in 1981 dramatically changed Mirjana's life and brought intense suffering at the hands of the communist authorities. After more than 35 years of apparitions, people still flock to Medjugorje in search of answers to life's big questions. Stories of miracles abound, and, according to Mirjana, more are yet to come "the Virgin entrusted her with ten prophetic secrets concerning the future of the world. In her new auto-biography, *My Heart Will Triumph*, Mirjana tells the story of Medjugorje through her own eyes "the same eyes that reportedly gaze upon the most revered woman in history.

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Customer Reviews

This work is largely an autobiographical account of one of the Medjugorje visionaries. A substantial portion of the book, perhaps two-thirds, is about Ms. Soldo's personal life history: her childhood, her time in high school, her attempts at college, her marriage, her experiences during the war. A significant theme throughout those years is the oppression of communism, particularly the sort which was terrified over the lack of control of the unfolding events of the Blessed Virgin's alleged visits. This oppression came down hard upon Mirjana, and her many persecutions as a young woman themselves offer substantial evidence that her claims are authentic. Indeed it would be quite astonishing that after seemingly endless trials by the communist regime directed against this

person, who by all accounts wanted nothing more than a quiet life, it would turn out that she fabricated the entire thing or was deceived by demonic forces. That would be like Samwise Gamgee making up the entire Lord of the Rings story because he wanted a little excitement in his life - a totally honest, simple soul who wanted nothing but a little garden in the back of a quiet house. So the book proceeds with a nice organization: her youth and her close relationship with her father, her time in high school and how dramatically it changed once the apparitions started. Her inability to finish college due to communist oppression, her marriage, the war years, and the period after the war. There are also plenty of anecdotes, such as her meeting with John Paul II and receiving his shoes after his death. The final section is a glimpse into her meetings with the many pilgrims who have gone to Medjugorje over the years as well as a surprisingly intimate sharing of what her experience of Mary is like during an apparition. "Sincere, simple, authentic, genuine" are words which come to mind. I found myself thinking, "yes, of course this is how it would be if I met the Blessed Mother." Mirjana answers the question everyone wants the answer to: "why has Mary been visiting for so long, why so many messages?" After you read this book you won't ask that anymore. You'll ask what you can do today to bring God's light into this dark world. That is ALL that matters. Not whether Medjugorje is true or not, or whether the end is nigh or any of that. What is God asking of you in your life this day so you can be his disciple more effectively? Let the rest to Him. The questions and curiosities only distract us and waste our energies. Throughout the book we are treated with photographs of her life. She also skillfully weaves some of Mary's messages throughout. Given the vast trove of messages, the fact that she is so capable of selecting some to fit the context of what she is talking about is notable. There are a few things I found striking. One is her humility. She insists throughout that Mary does not have favorite children: she is no more important or loved in the Blessed Virgin's eyes than anyone else on earth. It pains her that pilgrims focus so much on her, though she understands why they might. Mirjana is always directing people's eyes upward to God. Another delight in the book is her great sense of humor. She comes across as someone like you or I - just plain, down home, no-nonsense but deeply in love with God and wanting to do His will in all things. She stresses the importance of humor and rightly points out the poison of a melancholy which destroys faith and trust in God. She also stresses the importance of conversion over a continual curiosity about the messages or what will happen in the future. "Who cares what the secrets are if your time on this earth is up before they happen?" In this we hear echoes of St. Antony of the desert, who, when asked about the secret of his intense spiritual life, stated: "When I arise I act as though I will die before bed, and when I go to bed, I act as though I won't live until the morning." He was given a grace to live each day as though it were his last. The

time of our death is our own personal secret, and that is the one to focus on - conversion today, learning to love - today. Many will feel consoled by her words of complete and filial obedience to her bishop ("I would walk a hundred miles if he told me to"), as well as the Pope. In such a deeply divisive time it is refreshing to hear of her simple and confident faith that the Holy Spirit provides the Church the kind of Pope she needs for the times. Mirjana stresses throughout the book the importance of love, love, love. Never judge, never criticize, only help others come to learn the love of God by loving them. Anyone who is worried about an excessive focus on this needs to spend time with the Johannine works. Almost completely absent are any complaints about how frequently she is misrepresented by the many books written about Medjugorje. We finally get to hear it from her own mouth, and the feeling I got after finishing it was that the publication of this book may be one of the most important episodes in the history of Medjugorje in a very long time. I think it was Divine Providence that guided her to write this book at this time, and if she is reading this, I thank her very much for it. Just don't buy it to satisfy any kind of burning curiosity about the secrets or the future - you will be disappointed. The book concludes with a short section talking about the five main areas of focus: Prayer, Fasting, Confession, Mass, Scriptures. * * * I have been to Medjugorje twice: once in 1989 and again a year or two later (I returned only to see a little while later on tv the hotel where I was staying in Dubrovnik shelled by the war). I visited the houses of some of the visionaries though I can't recall who. Honestly, I treated the first trip as a kind of retreat, and resisted the urge to figure out whether anything was really happening there. I can say it was a profound experience of Church like none other on the planet. Everyone around me was there to change their heart - everyone. It was an experience of brotherhood like no other. It adds nothing whatsoever to say it, but I will. At one time I gazed up at the sun and stared at it around midday for several minutes. I clearly saw a white disk ("host," if you will) spinning around on the face of it. Whether or not it was a visual phenomenon I don't know. Don't be scandalized: I believe in the Real Presence so to me, I wanted to respect what I saw if it was from God, but it was of no importance to me, with the indwelling Christ of the Eucharist. What was the visual miracle to me when I had Christ's very own life blood coursing through me from Mass? I figured it was intended for others. The second time I went with a friend, who wanted me to accompany him. I felt very strongly in my heart that I was meant to be back home, busy about my life mission. A word was spoken to me while atop Cross mountain one evening alone, which I wrote in my journal. That was about 26 years ago and it is beginning to unfold in my life as the word said. The message is simple: change your life utterly for God, completely and totally. Set out on the journey anew each day. Live prayer, live and learn love, forgiveness, mercy. Immerse yourself in the Word of God, embrace the sacraments with frequency,

take God's love everywhere He tells you to, even if it is alone in your cell each day in unceasing prayer of reparation. The word God spoke to me awhile back: "Don't be like Jonah, looking out over the city of Ninevah wondering whether I will burn it down. Be like Abraham, looking out over Sodom and praying without ceasing for my mercy, that I may spare it." That is the choice before us, my brothers and sisters: will you be like Jonah or like Abraham?

I have read other books about Medjugorje, but this one is so personal and well written that it drew me into the story and I felt as if I were seeing and experiencing everything along with her as Mirijana recounts the events in this small village that changed her life and the lives of countless others. I feel as if Mary is speaking to me personally as I read and I am gaining more understanding and insight into what has and is occurring through her apparitions. I highly recommend My Heart Will Triumph!

A tour de force of love, highly recommended to all! Exactly what I expected from someone who says she has met the Blessed Virgin Mary! Every page drips love into our hearts. It is so plain to see how Mirjana has been transformed by the Love of Heaven - she says nothing negative about anyone or anything, even tyrants like Milosevic. She has suffered like the rest of us, more than some, less than others, but none of that matters to her, not because she sees Blessed Mary Ever Virgin, but because she has encountered and learned the love of Heaven. As she ages she sees how everything in her life has slowly revealed God's plan for her. Each of us, too, can find our role by learning to accept the events of our lives, to see them come together like a symphony played for us and by us, leading us by the hand towards Him; how each happening in our lives, big or small, has a subtle or 'loud' effect on each of us that ultimately reveals what God wants of us; all we need to do is pray and open our eyes and see it! All we need to do is to learn to accept each and every moment, praying to Him along the way. Her wedding bouquet story is a beautiful example of God's presence in our lives! Some would say it was coincidence, but she knows it is just one more of so many gifts from God our Father, who carefully watches over each of us! She got so emotional over that because she saw it so plainly for what it was - it was as if God Himself had handed her the forgotten bouquet, without her even knowing she had forgotten it! It was as if God her Father dropped by to bless her just before her big day! I too have had this happen with small things in my life and now I become emotional over them too, because in those moments in particular one can 'see' God and know and directly feel His Great Love! This has happened to each of us - think of that one story you always tell where something wonderfully unexpected happened just at the right moment - something we describe in its telling with words like 'luck' or 'good fortune'. And with that

moment in mind, know once and for all that it was not luck but a direct gift from God! It is hard to acknowledge it that way because then we have to acknowledge how closely God is watching over our every moment, good or bad, and how He knows us better than we know ourselves! But as Mirjana repeats from Our Lady, forgive ourselves, forget the past and step now, today, towards God. Begin the journey anew, awash in His forgiveness and His love! He is waiting for us with His arms open, like a father waiting with arms open and ready to catch his toddler as the child takes his first steps towards Him. Read this book, and let go, let the love on these pages transform you to become the person of God you were created to be! God bless! Greg J. Cring

I recently traveled to Medjugorje and the experience changed my life. It opened my heart and my eyes to Mother Mary's love for us. It drew me closer to God and strengthened my faith. I stayed with a group at Mirjana's. I heard her testimony and experienced Medjugorje in the two weeks I spent there. I have been anxiously awaiting her book today and basically read it in less than 12 hours. I couldn't put it down. I don't think anyone really understands the persecution these children had to endure. This book covers her childhood to the present day. It will warm your heart!!!! This is her story.. I don't think I've read a book so fast in my life!!!! am so glad I was able to meet Mirjana. In seeing her smile, the love and joy she radiates, you can truly tell she has been in the presence of Mother Mary.

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