

Medjugorje Approved by Pope Francis Resource.

**Pope Francis allows devotion to Medjugorje, where Virgin Mary said to appear.**

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The Bosnian village has become a major pilgrimage site, attracting hundreds of thousands each year and giving many people what they say is a renewed sense of spirituality

Pope Francis has approved a Catholic spiritual devotion centred in Medjugorje, a town in Bosnia that has been steeped in controversy over whether the Virgin Mary appears to local people, the Vatican has said.

The Vatican's doctrinal office said that the Pope was not declaring that messages given by the alleged apparition were authentic.

Rather, it said the pontiff was recognising there were "positive fruits" for Catholics in the spiritual experience tied to the town.

The statement appears to conclude decades of Vatican investigations into the alleged visitations, which were first reported by six children in 1981, in a scenario reminiscent of famous apparitions in the French town of Lourdes in the 19th century and more than 100 years ago in Fatima in Portugal.

The Bosnian village has become a major pilgrimage site, attracting hundreds of thousands each year and giving many people what they say is a renewed sense of spirituality.

Pope Francis had previously expressed doubt about the alleged phenomenon. Referencing messages said to have been given by the Virgin Mary to local townspeople, he told reporters in 2017 that he did not think Mary was "the head of a telegraph office".

The Vatican said its new note "does not imply that the alleged supernatural events are declared authentic".

"Instead, it only highlights that the Holy Spirit is acting fruitfully for the good of the faithful 'in the midst' of this spiritual phenomenon of Medjugorje," said the text.

The Vatican said Catholic faithful "must be attentive and cautious" in interpreting the alleged messages from Mary, which largely focus on themes of peace and piety, but also have warned of alleged coming world catastrophes.

### **'Complete sense of peace'**

Managing Director of a pilgrim tour operator has said the Vatican's statement will bring Medjugorje into the spotlight, which he said is great for the town and for faith in Ireland.

Niall Glynn's company, Marian Pilgrimages, brings around seven thousand Irish pilgrims to Bosnia each year, and he estimates in total around eleven thousand visit Medjugorje annually.

He said it is the second most popular pilgrimage next to Lourdes in France.

Mr Glynn said today's statement from the Vatican "confirms what thousands of our pilgrims have been seeing for many years, which is that Medjugorje is a special place with beautiful spiritual gains".

He said some people travel with Marian Pilgrimages every year, and they say they get a "complete sense of peace, that there is nowhere else in the world they want to be; they tell us it is a beautiful place".

[https://www.rte.ie/news/europe/2024/0919/1470855-medjugorje/?fbclid=IwY2xjawFZOXBleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHcdFQFptLFHXwz\\_CeJ1jk10bFCwqE8XBVHBRF3BpWI4RfHfmE1d8L5nnnQ\\_aem\\_3kWzOU-pyAZLZD7d5tKIXw&sfnsn=mo](https://www.rte.ie/news/europe/2024/0919/1470855-medjugorje/?fbclid=IwY2xjawFZOXBleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHcdFQFptLFHXwz_CeJ1jk10bFCwqE8XBVHBRF3BpWI4RfHfmE1d8L5nnnQ_aem_3kWzOU-pyAZLZD7d5tKIXw&sfnsn=mo)