



# FÁTIMA LUZ E PAZ

Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima

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*Time of grace and mercy:  
to give thanks for living in God*

## Pandemic Prompts Pilgrims to Look at The Shrine of Fatima from a New Perspective

/ Father Carlos Cabecinhas

The primary mission of the Shrine of Fatima is to welcome pilgrims, providing the conditions for a strong experience of faith. The pandemic that has hit us has radically altered the way pilgrims relate to the shrine. While for many Portuguese pilgrims it is possible, with due care, to visit the shrine and pray there and celebrate their faith, for the overwhelming majority of pilgrims from other countries, it has become impossible to come to Fatima. However, because we believe that the message of Fatima is especially important now, given the period we are going through, the Shrine is struggling to make pilgrimages possible in a different manner.

This year, to prepare and experience the most significant pilgrimages of the year – on 12th and 13th of May, August and October – we proposed a spiritual itinerary, offering the possibility to those who could not be physically present to pilgrim through the heart. You can still podcast it.

Every day, we digitally broadcast the Mass and the Rosary. And many, all over the world, are joining Fatima for these unique moments of celebration and prayer.

The Shrine's website also proposes various information and materials to get to know or extend your knowledge of the message of Fatima. There, it is also possible to enjoy a virtual visit to the temporary exhibitions that the Shrine has offered to those on pilgrimage to Cova da Iria.

Another way of being present in the Shrine, even at a distance, are the messages and prayers to Our Lady that so many pilgrims are sending us: these messages and prayers are placed next to the image of Our Lady in the Chapel.

The message of Fatima, which is a manifestation of God's mercy towards us and a message of hope, is especially important in these times of pandemic, because it helps us to face the difficulties of the present moment and to overcome discouragement and fear. Our Lady's promise to the seer Lucia is also addressed to us all: "I will never leave you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God". It is this message of hope that the Shrine wishes to continue to offer, even at a distance.

## Difficulties Due to a Lockdown Year Challenge the Shrine for the Next Triennium

Decrease in the number of pilgrims present in Cova da Iria leads the Shrine to reinvent itself in its way of bringing Fatima to the world / Carmo Rodeia



In 2020, for the first time in its history, the Shrine of Fatima experienced an International Anniversary Pilgrimage without the presence of pilgrims

For the Shrine, the year 2020 "has been one of the most difficult". So said its Rector, Father Carlos Cabecinhas, emphasizing two unavoidable facts: for the first time in over a hundred years, the Shrine celebrated its main international anniversary pilgrimage without the physical presence of pilgrims in Cova da Iria, and in October, the second most iconic date for Fatima, it was celebrated with a very limited number of pilgrims, who could only access the Prayer Area wearing a mask and had to stand in previously marked locations throughout the celebrations. The appeals to the responsibility of the pilgrims, whether from Cardinal António Marto or from the Shrine's Rectorate, ended up having an effect and the enclosure was never on the verge of reaching full capacity throughout the summer and, in particular, on 12 and 13 October. Throughout the summer, especially on Sundays, the Shrine still registered a significant presence of pilgrims, the overwhelming majority Portuguese. The decrease of pilgrims, especially organized foreign groups, resulted in a decrease in the flow of work and also in a drop in revenue, as the Rector of the Shrine pointed out in the press conference that preceded the October celebrations.

Fatima lost more than half of its revenue (50.6%) and the drop in donations reached 46.9%.

The number of pilgrims also fell: between March and August 436 groups cancelled their participation in the celebrations. From 733 groups present last year in October, statistics show that for the two coming months of this year – October and November – this number drops to only 97 groups registered, and they have not yet confirmed their presence in Fatima.

Between March 14 and May 30, the Shrine did not welcome pilgrims. During this period the Shrine reinvented itself by taking Fatima to all those who could not participate in the celebrations since the collective ceremonies were suspended. The daily transmission through the social networks of the Shrine – Youtube and Facebook – of two masses and two rosaries pushed up the number of pilgrims from all over the world that follow and participate everyday in the celebration, from home.

The Shrine now counts 1.2 million followers on Facebook and 176,000 subscribers to its Youtube channel.

Despite its connection to the whole world through digital networks, Fatima is seeking to recover the momentum lost in this time of pandemic and is already preparing the next triennium, from 2020 to 2023, seeking to be a response of hope, joy and love as has always been the way of Mary.

## Pilgrimage with Limited Places and One of the Strangest 13 October in Cova da Iria

Pilgrimage President warns against “populist movements and nationalisms” in times of pandemic, and reinforces the need for women to play a role in the Church / Carmo Rodeia



Cardinal António Marto, praised the “civic and Christian responsibility” of the pilgrims who participated in the celebrations of the 13th of October

Fatima took leave from another year of great pilgrimages. On this 12th and 13th October, the enclosure reached six thousand pilgrims, the number defined as the maximum capacity of the Shrine at this time of pandemic.

At the end of the pilgrimage, which respected all the rules - places marked on the ground, mandatory wearing of the mask, impossibility of moving around the enclosure and the need to maintain physical distance between all - the final image of the gathered faithful deserved the praise of those who have a privileged view over the Prayer Area.

Cardinal Antonio Marto, Bishop of Leiria-Fatima, praised the “civic and Christian responsibility” of the pilgrims who participated in the celebrations of the 13<sup>th</sup> of October.

“Before everything else, I want to thank you all for this proof of your civic responsibility, accepting the set limitations for the good of public health. It is a civic example, but also a Christian example, of faith, of love for one’s neighbour”, said the Catholic responsible, at the end of the International Anniversary Mass celebrated in Cova da Iria on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October.

Despite the small number of participants “in comparison with the pilgrimages of previous years”, the Cardinal spoke of a “spectacle of beauty”.

The Bishop of Leiria-Fatima invited those present to pray a Hail Mary in silence for the sick and the victims of Covid-19, those who died and their relatives in mourning.

The reflection recalled that the sixth and last apparition, in October 1917,

was marked by a “particular and very significant sign”, when the three Little Shepherds saw Jesus Christ “blessing the world”.

“The Lady’s message is the bearer of divine blessings for this world of ours”, added the Cardinal who challenged the pilgrims to be the messengers “of compassion, tenderness, affection and



Several groups were present who completed their pilgrimage on foot



The president of the October International Anniversary Pilgrimage, Monsignor José Ornelas, warned of the dangers of populism

care for one another, especially for the weakest, the loneliest, the neediest”.

“God’s mercy wants to embrace our world”, he continued.

The President of the Pilgrimage, Bishop José Ornelas of Setubal, also President of the *Conferência Episcopal Portuguesa*, warned of the dangers of populism.

“We live in a time when populist movements manipulate the nostalgia of the past, the real and imaginary fear, the danger of the foreigner, of what is supposed different; they rely on the greed to possess and dominate and even use

the name of God and religious models for their own interests”, he said in the homily of the 13 October Mass.

On the other hand, he defended a new “paradigm” of leadership in the Catholic Church, giving more value to women in terms of decision-making, as Pope Francis asks.

“To emphasize the feminine and the maternal is not only to seek a balance of powers or influences in the functional organization of the Church. It is a question of changing the paradigm, of changing the way of thinking: the world does not belong to those who

command the most, it belongs to those who build life the most. The Church’s leadership is not founded on the idea of power, but on life, care and service”, Bishop Ornelas said in his homily. The Bishop of Setubal asserted that promoting the role of women “contributes decisively to promoting the ministries in the Church, men and women, nowadays too focused on ordained ministries”.

More than 50 priests, 9 of whom were bishops, concelebrated this pilgrimage. In the press room 132 professionals from 39 media were accredited.



“To emphasize the feminine and the maternal is not only to seek a balance of powers or influences in the functional organization of the Church”.

## “Foreigners are a necessity and a good thing for Portugal”, Said the President of the August Pilgrimage

D. José Traquina, president of the Episcopal Commission for the Social Pastoral and Human Mobility, presided over the celebrations of the 12th and 13th of August, marked by the welcoming of the first international pilgrims of the year, who had announced their visit to Cova da Iria after the end of the lockdown. / Carmo Rodeia



Seven groups, three of them from other countries, namely from Spain, Italy and Poland, have registered with the Shrine's services as taking part in the celebrations

D. José Traquina, Bishop of Santarém, presided over the international anniversary pilgrimage of the 12th and 13th of August, in Fatima, where he appealed for the involvement of Christians in welcoming migrants who are “a necessity and a good thing for Portugal”: “As Christians, let us manifest our capacity for welcoming others and let us not cultivate feelings that do not correspond to our Christian matrix of universal brotherhood. Foreigners are a necessity and a good thing for Portugal, not to be exploited or mistreated, but welcomed and protected with the same respectability that we wish for the Portuguese living in any other country”, said the president of the Episcopal Commission for the Social Pastoral

and Human Mobility in the reflection he shared in Cova da Iria on the evening of the 12th of August, addressing the participants in the National Pilgrimage of Migrants and Refugees.

The Prelate stressed the importance of foreigners “being informed about our rules and habits of living together and enjoying the conditions to express their own culture”.

D. José Traquina also recalled that in this time of pandemic “the value of human life as a gift and greater good” has to be highlighted, he referred also to the migrants who face “increased difficulties” and also the reality of Cabo Delgado, in Mozambique, where “there are more than 250 thousand displaced people”.

“It is urgent that a solution be found to stop the armed fighting that affects innocent people”, he said.

That evening, the procession with the image of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima was performed by voluntary pilgrims, one of them being an emigrant to France.

The August pilgrimage is always marked by the warmth of the diaspora, but this year, due to the pandemic, the presence of emigrants was reduced.

In his second address to the pilgrims, the prelate of Santarém referred to the “millions of poor and refugees” who are fleeing, to “migrants” who are “exploited” and to those forcibly displaced, highlighting that “everyone has the right” to celebrate life.



The International Anniversary Pilgrimage of August incorporated, for the 48th time, the National Migrant and Refugee Pilgrimage

“All the men and women who were like sheep without a shepherd are, today, these millions of poor people around the world: the millions of refugees who have to flee, like Jesus, in order to live a proper life; the migrants who, because they do not know the legal ways to emigrate, are exploited by smugglers and traffickers; the millions of people forcibly displaced within their own country for lack of security; all of them have the right to seat at the wedding feast”, he said.

For the Mass of the 13<sup>th</sup> of August, the Bishop of Santarem began with the story of the Gospel, which tells the well-known episode of the wedding at Cana, and then affirmed that since the feast is a sign of “community joy” that “gives meaning to human life”, then everyone has the right to participate in the feast “called for by God”.

“The feast is the convergence and the community celebration in joy that gives meaning to human life. Without conviviality, without celebration, human life becomes difficult. For many people, the Church is recognized for the dimension of the feast: feasts at all the stages of Christian life or at the rhythm of the liturgical calendar”, he recalled.

D. José Traquina regretted that the pandemic had limited the organisation of feasts and gatherings, but noted that the situation “accentuated” the awareness that a great number of popular feasts have their origin in the Church and the cancellation of celebrations has highlighted “essential signs”.

#### **The wheat that becomes bread at the great banquet of the Eucharist**

The offering of wheat is a characteristic gesture of the international mass celebrated on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August. This year it took place for the 80th time, bringing together to the altar numerous pilgrims of all ages who symbolically dropped wheat for the confection of the Eucharistic bread.

This tradition has been celebrated since 1940, when a group of young people belonging to the Catholic Agrarian Youth from 17 parishes of the Diocese of Leiria, offered 30 bushels of wheat to prepare the hosts to be distributed in the Shrine of Fatima. Today pilgrims from all Portuguese dioceses as well as foreigners can participate.

#### **D. António Marto asks for prayers for the Lebanese people**

D. António Marto asked the pilgrims gathered in the Shrine of Fatima not to stop “praying for peace” and, after reminding the Lebanese people, he also referred to “the sick, dead and elderly alone” in the context of the pandemic.

“Do not stop praying for peace in the world. And, speaking about peace, I want to remember here the dear people, today so martyred by war, the people of Lebanon, martyred by war and by the catastrophe that has killed so many and left others homeless. Let us have a moment of silence and prayer for this people”, asked the Cardinal of Leiria-Fatima, addressing the pilgrims at the end of the Eucharist that closes the August pilgrimage to the Shrine of Fatima.

In his greeting, the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima also recalled the firemen, “soldiers of peace”, who “have been on the front lines putting out fires”: “I want to remember those who were wounded, those who died, one from my own diocese, the parents to whom I send my condolences, and the victims of the fires. May God give them strength of soul to move forward”.

D. António Marto added that the August pilgrimage to the shrine is “always beautiful”, “even without the crowd of previous years”, above all “because of this specific characteristic that it is dedicated to all migrants, to all Portuguese brothers and sisters who work abroad and spend holidays in Portugal or to foreigners who work in Portugal and who today represent several peoples, cultures and races united in the same faith and love, forming one family, beyond all differences”, he concluded.



## Cardinal Antonio Marto Invites to “detoxify hearts and the world”

Celebration of 13 September gathered the largest crowd of the year in Cova da Iria / Cátia Filipe



Nine national groups were announced for this pilgrimage, one from France, four from Spain, two from Italy and one from Poland

Cardinal Antonio Marto said that the pilgrimage of the 13<sup>th</sup> of September in Cova da Iria was a “strong and intense moment”, especially in the “difficult times” of the pandemic, and he thanked the large crowd that participated in the celebrations, a “proof that faith overcomes fear”.

“We shared a call for a corporal and spiritual cure, for us and for all humanity”, said the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima at the end of the Mass celebrated in the Prayer Area, in front of thousands of pilgrims, mainly of Portuguese origin.

The Catholic prelate stressed that “to heal the world’s illnesses, medicine and human techniques are not enough, spiritual health is also necessary”.

D. António Marto invited everyone to “use the medicine of mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation”, which enables “hearts and the world to be detoxified from the burden of aggression, rancour, resentment and hatred, desires and thirst for revenge, all feelings which, normally, end in violence or even cruelty”.

“Only forgiveness and reconciliation can overcome these evils, these illnesses, in order to rebuild the bonds of brotherhood and peace”, he pointed out, also stressing that “a world where there is no forgiveness of God and no mutual forgiveness, towards each other, is a lost world”.

The Bishop of Leiria-Fatima addressed, as usual, a greeting to the young people, recalling in particular the beginning of the school year: “Begin this school year well, with great attention and seriousness, fulfilling the sanitary norms so that there is no contagion in the schools”, he asked.

The cardinal extended his greeting to the sick of Covid-19 and remembered all those who died, leaving a message of solidarity to their families.

D. António Marto also asked for prayers for the reconstruction of Lebanon and for the refugees from the Moria refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos: “May Europe be generous in opening its doors to them and in receiving them”, he appealed.



This was the greatest pilgrimage of this year with most pilgrims present in Cova da Iria



The evocative programme of the fifth apparition of Our Lady in 1917 included, for the first time, the deaf pilgrims who made their sixth national pilgrimage

The Bishop of Leiria-Fatima also thanked, on behalf of the pilgrims, the president of the pilgrimage, Monsignor Manuel Pelino, Bishop Emeritus of Santarem, who in his homily at the Mass he presided, spoke above all of forgiveness and reconciliation as fundamental values of the Christian faith.

The Bishop Emeritus of Santarem presided over the celebrations of the 12th and 13th of September in Fatima. In his two addresses – on the evening of the 12th and at Mass on the 13th – he spoke of human fragility and the need of God: “We need to change, to turn from indifference to solidarity, from self-sufficiency to humility and fraternal service”, he said in his address to the pilgrims at the Prayer

salvation of the individual in his life, in his world and with his world and in eternity”, stressed D. Manuel Pelino.

For the President of the celebration, it is a question of “global health for a wounded humanity” and also of “spiritual healing; a change of attitude towards life, towards nature and towards others”.

On the 13th, in the homily of the International Mass, D. Manuel Pelino took up this theme, underlining that “forgiveness must always be present because the offenses, the words and attitudes that hurt, the vanities and envy that divide, the bitterness of evil dispositions, all are rooted in the human heart”.

“Forgiveness is the foundation of fraternal coexistence within the community, it brings us closer to God, leading us to love others as He loves us. In this way it guides

us towards a reconciled existence and makes God’s mercy and grace shine more clearly in our lives and in the life of the Church”, the Prelate asserted.

The evocative programme of Our Lady’s fifth apparition in 1917 included, for the first time, the deaf pilgrims, who made their sixth national pilgrimage.

This was the pilgrimage of the year 2020 most attended by pilgrims in Cova da Iria, and the shrine was forced to close the entrances in the middle of the celebration.

Constant calls were also shared with the crowd of pilgrims scattered around the enclosure to comply with the rules of social distancing.

In Fatima, bishops recall the effects of Covid-19: “The pandemic has exposed our fragility and the false security on which we base our lives”.



Vigil on the evening of the 12th. “In fact, we thought we were masters of the world, self-sufficient, capable of everything but, eventually, the pandemic has exposed our fragility and the false security on which we have based our lives”, said D. Manuel Pelino.

In his homily he recalled the Pope’s prayer invoking divine help to “overcome the terrible scourge of the coronavirus” before the Christ of Saint Marcellus and the Marian icon known as *Salus Populi Romani*, i.e. “the icon of Our Lady of Health, or of Salvation, that is, of global health, of the body and of the soul”: “It is the salvation which Jesus communicated in his time and which he grants us today through the intercession of his most holy Mother, the



## Our Lady of Fatima Pilgrim Image N°. 2 Went On Pilgrimage to Five Casas da Hospitalidade as Part of World Mental Health Day

The beginning of this pilgrimage was solemnly marked on 10<sup>th</sup> of October / Frei Hermínio Araújo, OFM



This pilgrimage was solemnly launched on 10 October, World Mental Health Day

Our Lady of Fatima Pilgrim Image N°. 2 went on pilgrimage to five *Casas da Hospitalidade* as part of World Mental Health Day celebrations. This pilgrimage took place between the 9th and 18th of October, and included the Psychiatric Clinic of S. José (Telheiras – Lisbon), the Casa de Saúde da Idanha (Belas), the Casa de Saúde Santa Rosa de Lima (Belas), the Centro Psiquiátrico Nossa Senhora de Fátima (Cascais – Parede) and the Casa de Saúde do Telhal (Mem Martins).

The Health Pastoral Team of the Psychiatric Clinic of S. José prepared and coordinated this pilgrimage, based on the theme: “Living with Mary the impact of the pandemic on everyone’s mental health”.

In a text sent to the Press Room of the Shrine of Fatima, one of the responsible for this pilgrimage, Friar Hermínio Araújo, highlighted that “everyone was included in the prayer and reflection in a very special way, especially those who most experience loneliness”.

The beginning of this pilgrimage was solemnly marked on October 10<sup>th</sup>, the World Mental Health Day, with a Eucharist ceremony presided by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon, D. Manuel Clemente, held at the S. José Psychiatric Clinic in Lisbon.

In his words to the patients, the prelate spoke of the Virgin Mary as “Mother of Consolation”, because consolation “is the practical response to the loneliness that has been increasing in the difficult times of the pandemic”. In his homily for this celebration, Bishop Manuel Clemente asked: “If we are consoled by God, shall we not console others?”.

This pilgrimage “was one of consolation, of joy and of hope”, explains Friar Hermínio Araújo.

“During these days I often remembered Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth in

terms of availability, wonder, gratitude and praise”, he said.

Our Lady of Fatima Pilgrim Image N°. 2 was taken to the sick and to the collaborators.

“As a Hospital Chaplain for many years, I have accompanied many sick people, health professionals, volunteers and others to the Shrine of Fatima; but during these days, it is Fatima who has come to the houses of hospitality”, applauded Friar Hermínio Araújo.

Throughout these days, “joy and hope were visible on so many faces marked by so many frailties and sufferings, and I was witness to unique

moments of encounter and charm, in prayers, gratitude and praise”.

For him, these days were “graceful after so many months of so limited pastoral contact with the sick; this exchange was very significant for me, as a spiritual and religious assistant, because I saw the sick, the collaborators, the sisters and brothers, living this pilgrimage intensely”.

“Many community celebrations and many moments of individual prayer were deeply experienced” recalls Friar Hermínio Araújo, who was present at all the celebrations of welcome and farewell to the Pilgrim Image N°. 2 of Our Lady of Fatima.

The final Eucharist of the pilgrimage took place on the World Mission Day, reinforcing our Christian identity as missionaries: “journeying towards others, as pilgrims like Mary and pilgrims with Mary, living the primacy of God, in openness to others in hospitality”.

Made up according to the indications of Sister Lucia, the first Pilgrim Image of Our Lady of Fatima was offered by the Bishop of Leiria and solemnly crowned by the Archbishop of Évora on May 13, 1947. From that date on, the Pilgrim Image has travelled the whole world several times, carrying its message of peace and love.

In order to respond to the immense number of requests coming from all over the world, several replicas of the first Pilgrim Image were manufactured, totalling thirteen.



Many collective celebrations and many moments of individual prayer were intensely experienced



## “On this boat... are all of us”

An insight on the relationship between Fatima and the suffering of the Pope in this time of pandemic / Carmo Rodeia



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On 27 March, in the middle of Lent, Francis also recalled “the bishop dressed in white” and the memory of Lucia about the Third Apparition

In one of the Fatima apparitions, according to Lucia’s accounts, the Virgin prophesied on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 1917 that the Holy Father would have much to suffer.

Regarding this third apparition, the seer referred to the revelation of a secret that included various visions. In one of these the three children saw “a bishop dressed in white”, who they presumed to be the Holy Father, climbing “a steep mountain, at the top of which there was a big Cross”, before passing through “a big city half in ruins” and who “half trembling with halting step, afflicted with pain and sorrow, prayed for the souls of the corpses he met on his way”.

The third part of the Secret of Fatima, studied and revealed at the request of Saint John Paul II, who found in it a perfect harmony between what Lucia narrated and his own personal history (especially after the assassination attempt on May 13, 1981), unquestionably challenges us about the connection between Fatima and the Popes.

The very Theological Commentary developed in 2000 by Joseph Ratzinger, still Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which supplemented the revelation of the Secret transmitted years before in Cova da Iria, fundamentally underlines this intimate connection. And such connection was actualized, in a more gen-

eral perspective, when Benedict XVI visited Portugal in 2010, and stated that the mission of Fatima was not yet “finished”, recalling the biblical story of Cain and Abel to talk about violence in humanity: “I have come to Fatima to pray, in union with Mary and so many pilgrims, for our human family, afflicted as it is by various ills and sufferings”. During the blessing, the Pope underlined that “consolation of God’s compassionate love” is present “in all suffering”. “As you see, the Pope needs to open himself ever more fully to the mystery of the Cross, embracing it as the one hope and the supreme way to gain and to gather in the Crucified One all his brothers and sisters in humanity”, he further said.

On 27 March, in the middle of Lent, Francis also recalled “the bishop dressed in white” and that memory of Lucia about the Third Apparition.

Francis walked alone across St Peter’s Square, under a torrential rain at nightfall, carrying the world on his back, as he too was surprised by “an unexpected and turbulent storm”.

“We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat... are

all of us”. And he continued: “In this storm, the façade of those stereotypes with which we camouflaged our egos, always worrying about our image, has fallen away, uncovering once more that common belonging, of which we cannot be deprived: our belonging as brothers and sisters”.

That afternoon, the Pope, Peter’s successor, was the “bishop dressed in white”, who once again embraced the cross, in the midst of the anguish and adversity as: “thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets and our cities; it has taken over our lives”, and from this cross he entrusted humanity to God, remembering that it is in conversion that the way to salvation lies.

“Prayer and quiet service: these are our victorious weapons”, said Francis.

At the same time, the “bishop dressed in white”, in his human frailty, became the great missionary of God’s consolation: “The Lord asks us and, in the midst of our tempest, invites us to awaken and put into practice that solidarity and hope capable of giving strength, support and meaning to these hours when everything seems to be floundering [...]. We have an anchor: on his cross we have been saved. We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed”.

# The Secret of Fatima and the Popes\*

/ Carmo Rodeia



On 13 October 1996, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and future Pope Benedict XVI, presided over the anniversary pilgrimage of October

The Secret of Fatima is at the heart of the message of Fatima and refers to the visions and words witnessed by the Little Shepherds on the apparition of Our Lady on July 13, 1917, about which she asked them to be reserved, asking them not to disclose them to anyone.

“Do not tell this to anybody. Francisco, yes, you may tell him”, that was the order given, according to Lucia. It should be recalled that the three Shepherds witnessed the Apparitions differently: only Lucia interacted with Our Lady, she saw, listened and talked; Jacinta saw and listened, but didn’t talk, and Francisco just saw. That explains the authorization to tell Francisco. And the Secret was kept, despite the numerous pressures and threats, as one who puts all his heart to protect his own life.

Lucia accepted to write about the Apparitions but kept the content of the Secret; she only put it in words after having received the authorization “from Heaven”, as she said herself, which she did in the 1940s.

The first two parts (the vision of Hell and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary) were made known in 1941; the third (the vision of the martyr and pilgrim Church and the ruined city), written in 1944, remained hidden and was publicly revealed in Fatima in 2000.

The third part of the Secret includes a reference to an attack on the figure of the Pope, and John Paul II linked this revelation to the attack on him on May 13, 1981, in Rome, which he survived because “a mother’s hand” deflected the trajectory of the bullet.

In a conversation held in April 2000 in the Carmel of Coimbra with Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, then secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Sister Lucia agreed that the third part of the Secret consisted of a prophetic vision, especially of the struggle of atheistic Communism against the Church and Christians, which describes the sufferings of the victims of faith in the 20th century.

“It is an endless Way of the Cross, guided by the Popes through the twentieth century”, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State of the Vatican, emphasized when the third part of the Secret of Fatima was revealed on May 13, 2000.

Angelo Sodano alluded to the 1981 attack and to “the mother’s hand that guided the bullet’s path and permitted that the dying Pope stopped on the threshold of death”.

The fact that it is called a “secret” had nourished, for generations, the idea that the content of the revelations, mainly the third part, disclosed 83 years after the apparitions, was related to something terrible like the end of the world, and that the Popes had wanted to keep it secret because of its “terrible revelations”.

Nothing could be further from reality, as cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, then Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and today Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, wrote in his theological commentary on the Message of Fatima: “those who expected exciting apocalyptic revelations about the end of the world or the future course of history are bound to be disappointed. Fatima does not satisfy our curiosity in this way, just as

Christian faith in general cannot be reduced to an object of mere curiosity”.

And he goes on: “What remains was already evident when we began our reflections on the text of the ‘secret’: the exhortation to prayer as the path of ‘salvation for souls’ and, likewise, the summons to penance and conversion”.

In his theological commentary, then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger underlines the key word of that third part of the Secret which is precisely the threefold cry of the angel with the flaming sword on his left hand: “Penance, Penance, Penance!”.



On 12 and 13 May 2010, Benedict XVI presided over the May anniversary pilgrimage

That is the call for repentance and for conversion, in the certainty that the good will triumph over evil, as he continues: “the vision of the third part of the ‘secret’, so distressing at first, concludes with an image of hope: no suffering is in vain, and it is a suffering Church, a Church of martyrs, which becomes a sign-post for man in his search for God”.

“From the suffering of the witnesses there comes a purifying and renewing power, because their suffering is the actualization of the suffering of Christ himself and a communication in the here and now of its saving effect”, he underlines.

Therefore, he reminds the promise of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of John: “In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart; I have overcome the world (Jn 16:33)”.

“The message of Fatima invites us to trust in this promise”, he concludes.

\*This text has been written from the *Enciclopédia de Fátima* and the *Revista Fátima XXI*, 1 (May 2014).

## Popes Honoured the Shrine with the Golden Rose

Paul VI inaugurated a tradition of distinction for the Shrine that was to be followed by Benedict XVI in 2010 and by Francis in 2017. The offering of the Golden Rose is a sign of the recognition of fidelity to the Church of Christ and its Vicar. / Carmo Rodeia



Rose offered by Pope Paul VI



Rose offered by Pope Francis



Rose offered by Pope Benedict XVI

The Shrine of Fatima has three Golden Roses in its Museum, the highest distinction that the Popes grant to personalities or shrines, churches or cities, as a token of recognition for the noticeable services provided to the Church or for the good of society.

A tradition that goes back to the end of the sixth century or beginning of the seventh century, the blessing and attribution of Golden Roses usually take place on Laetare Sunday, at the end of Lent. At first, the Golden Rose consisted of a single flower. With Pope Sixtus IV, it took the form it has had now for centuries: a rosebush, completely in gold, with some foliage, to which were sometimes added precious stones.

The first Golden Rose of the Shrine of Fatima was granted by Blessed Pope Paul VI, on November 21st, 1964, at the end of the third session of the Vatican Council II, having been blessed by the Pope on March 28th, 1965, in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace.

During the blessing ceremony, Blessed Paul VI recalled the significance of the Golden Rose that, in its "mystical meaning, represent the joy of the double Jerusalem – Triumphant Church and Militant Church – and the beautiful Flower of Jericho – the Immaculate Virgin -, who is also your Patroness and the joy and the crown of all Saints".

"We think it appropriate to recall, today in particular, the solemn consecration of our predecessor Pius XII to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. To this end, we have decided to send the Golden Rose to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima for a special mission".

"The Golden Rose is the testimony of Our paternal affection for the noble Portuguese nation; it is the token of Our devotion to this distinguished Shrine, where an altar was erected to the Mother of God", underlined Paul VI at the time.

The Pope also added that the rose is the symbol of penance, recalling the message of Our Lady to the Little Shepherds during the Apparitions from May to October 1917: "The Virgin of Fatima came to the world to remind the evangelic message of penance and prayer; as it has been so much forgotten by them, it has to be you, dear sons and daughters, who should give the example regarding the fulfilment of this message".

The Rose was displayed in the Church of Saint Anthony of the Portuguese in Rome until it was brought to Portugal on May 13th, 1965, by Cardinal Fernando Cento, legate of the Pope. Attached to the rose was a letter addressed to Bishop João Pereira Venâncio.

On May 12th, 2010, on his pilgrimage to Fatima, Pope Benedict XVI offered the second Golden Rose to the Shrine; it was the first time a Pope was offering a rose personally on the Portuguese territory.

Kneeling in front of the Statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, in the Chapel of the Apparitions, the now Pope Emeritus, in prayer before the Virgin Mary presented the Golden Rose "as a homage of gratitude" for the wonders that, through Her, God has realized in the hearts of the pilgrims.

"I am sure that the Little Shepherds of Fatima, Blessed Francisco and Jacinta and the

Servant of God Lucia of Jesus, are united with us at this hour of prayer and rejoicing", he added.

In 2017, on the occasion of the Centenary, the Pope offered the rose at the beginning of his pilgrimage to Cova da Iria, just before a prayer that brought together, in silence, the whole crowd present in the prayer area. One day before his arrival, the Holy Father had referred to this distinction, as a symbol of "union in prayer with all the pilgrims".

"I need to have you with me; I need your communion - physical or spiritual, what is important is being there at heart - for my bouquet of flowers, my golden rose. By forming one heart and one soul alone, I will give you all to Our Lady, asking her to whisper to each one of you: My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God", said Pope Francis in a video message in which he anticipated his visit to the Shrine of Fatima.

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2004, the Shrine of Our Lady of Sameiro, in Braga, also received a Golden Rose, awarded by Saint John Paul II, on the occasion of the centenary of the coronation of the image of Our Lady, and presented by Cardinal Eugénio Sales, legate of the Pope.

Other roses were offered to Portuguese sovereigns or to other important individuals and characters: in 1454, D. Afonso V received a rose from Nicholas V; in 1506 D. Manuel I received one; D. João III, in 1525, from Pope Clement; D. Catarina e D. João, sons of D. João III, in 1550 from Pope Julius III; D. Maria II in 1842 and D. Amélia in 1892.

## Fatima Apparitions Were Declared Worthy of Credit 90 Years Ago

The pastoral letter of the bishop of the restored diocese of Leiria, Monsignor José Alves Correia da Silva, was published on October 13, 1930 / Carmo Rodeia



D. José Alves Correia da Silva with Father Manuel Nunes Formigão, in Cova da Iria

The pastoral letter, dated 13 October 1930, 10 years after the bishop of the restored diocese of Leiria took office, and which declares “the visions of the children in Cova da Iria worthy of credit”, was only the predictable outcome of the most intimate conviction of Bishop da Silva regarding the events that had taken place between May and October 1917 in Cova da Iria.

And there is not little evidence of the curiosity, and interest, that the phenomenon had aroused in the diocesan prelate mind, which led him to appoint the canonical commission that was to carry out a long investigation, over 8 years, from 1922 to 1930.

The visit to Cova da Iria on 14 September 1921; the acquisition of lands and permission for public worship in the chapel that had been built there by the People of God; the order for the opening of a well at the foot of the chapel (13 November 1921) and other actions that followed the appointment

of the Canonical Commission in 1922, such as the support for the creation of the Pious Union of the Servites (1924 for men and 1926 for women); the regulation of the pilgrimages (1925); the creation of a medical checkpoint or the order for the construction of confessionals, followed by the creation of a chaplaincy (July 1927), are important facts that attest the attention the Bishop of Leiria paid to Fatima and the fact that all this could have no other outcome than the recognition, in a pastoral letter, of the events.

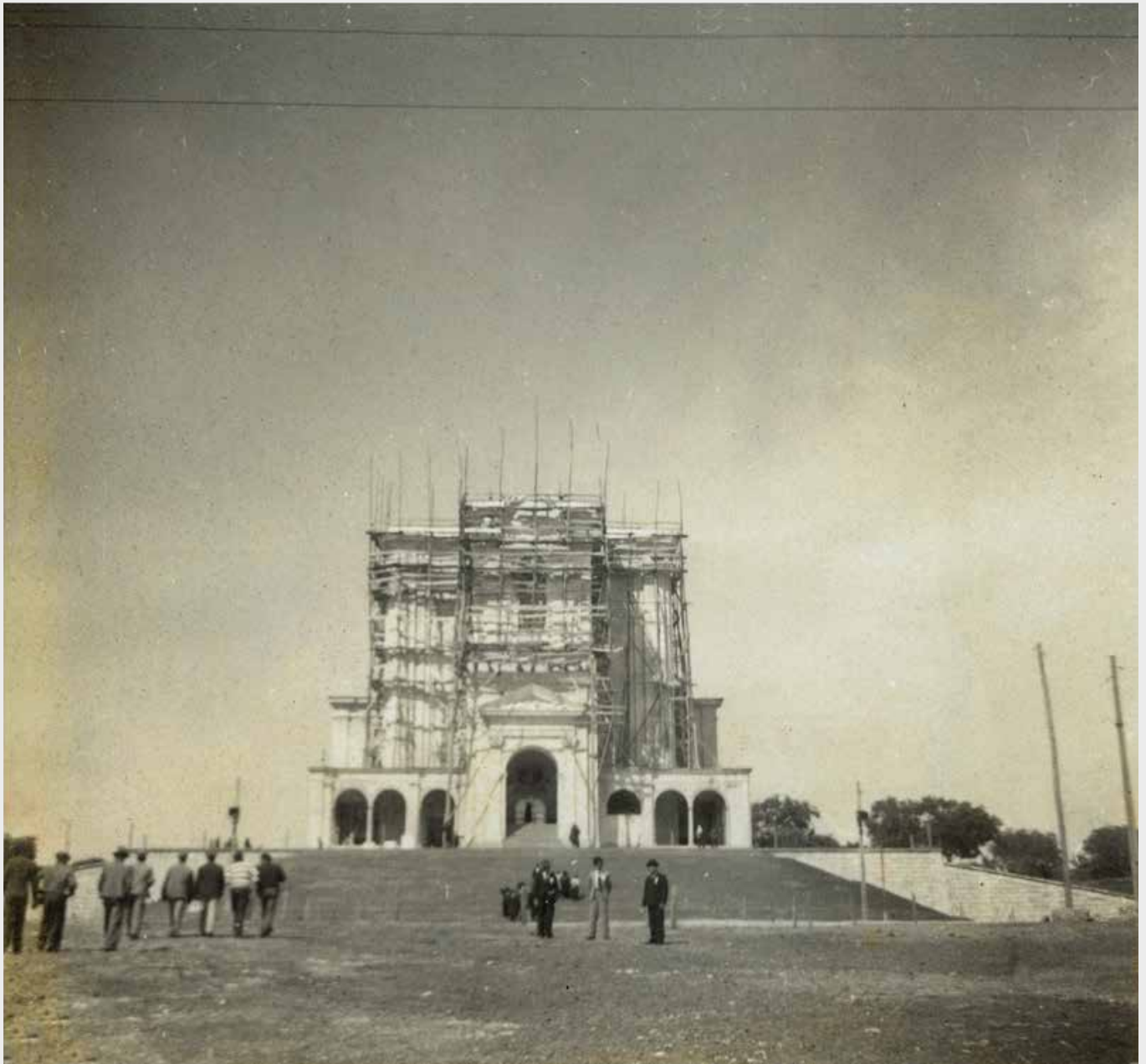
The letter marks, moreover, a new beginning for Fatima: Besides declaring as “worthy of credit the visions of the three children in Cova da Iria”, it officially allows “the worship of Our Lady”, thus giving an extraordinary impulse to the Shrine that, years later, would be declared “altar of the world”, because it became the final destination not only of Portuguese pilgrims but of many others, coming from all over

the world, who were here attracted by a message increasingly considered as a message to the whole world, as Father Luciano Cristino, former director of the Studies Department of the Shrine of Fatima, recognizes in the article published in the Encyclopaedia of Fatima.

This pastoral letter also marks, therefore, the end of a process that had begun years before, arousing the curiosity of many, including in the Vatican. After this solemn validation of the Fatima apparitions, various seminaries, convents and organisations of religious men and women were founded in Cova da Iria. D. José Alves Correia da Silva granted to the chaplain jurisdiction for baptisms and weddings and exempted the Shrine from the parochial jurisdiction. He appointed the chaplain as Rector and took out the Shrine from the parish of Fatima, granting its Rector all the ordinary power “as if he were parish priest”.

# The Shrine of Fatima

A Living Work / Carmo Rodeia



The Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima stands at the place where the three Little Shepherds were playing, “building a small wall”. The first stone was blessed on 13 May 1928 by the Archbishop of Evora.

At the end of last year, the organic structure of the Shrine of Fatima comprised 339 persons collaborating within ten departments: Rectorate, Welcome of Pilgrims, Pastoral of the Message of Fatima, Charitable Action, Studies, Accommodation, Museum, Surveillance and Operational Management, Construction and Maintenance, Economics and Finance. The Accommodation Department is the biggest in number of collaborators, followed by the Surveillance and Operational Management and the Constructions and Maintenance departments. These three areas bring together around 60% of the Shrine’s employees. After the construction of the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity,

and assuming the challenge that Pope Benedict XVI launched in 2010 in preparation for the Centenary of the Apparitions, the Shrine has extended its spaces and services for a better welcoming of the expected increase in pilgrims. The commitment to the cultural pastoral, to the preservation of the built and artistic heritage of Fatima, and the importance given to music in the context of the celebrations were some of the highlights of the Shrine’s offer. This growth has always been thought keeping the fragility pastoral in mind, maintaining and even, in these many years, reinforcing the retreat solutions proposed. In this line of action, the creation of a department dedicated to the Pastoral of the

Message of Fatima, after the Centenary, derived from the addition of new spaces dedicated to the diffusion and interpretation of the Message that Our Lady left to the Little Shepherds in Cova da Iria. The School of the Shrine is an example of this, because of its various pastoral dynamics centred on the Message of Fatima, particularly regarding spirituality and intergenerational welcome, which it has been energising. In the fulfilment of its Mission, assuming voluntary work as an essential contribution, the Shrine of Fatima has strengthened the possibilities of voluntary collaboration in Cova da Iria, involving more and more young people to welcome the pilgrims and assist the disabled.

# The Shrine of Fatima, on 19 August, Evoked the Memory of the Fourth Apparition of Our Lady to the Little Shepherds in Valinhos / Carmo Rodeia



Pilgrims were invited to constant prayer, as requested by Our Lady

Father Carlos Cabecinhas, Rector of the Shrine, presided over the celebration held in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity.

The priest urged the pilgrims to see “how the apparitions bear witness to the immense goodness of God, and how they

left in this place a message of hope and a call to constant and confident prayer”.

On August 19, 1917, Our Lady appeared in Valinhos, about 500 meters from the site of Aljustrel, after the children had been taken, on the 13<sup>th</sup>, by the administrator of the Municipality, to

Vila Nova de Ourém for questioning. “Pray, pray much and make sacrifices for sinners, for many souls go to hell because there is no one to make sacrifices for them”, said Our Lady.

In the rosary of that day, the memory of this event was celebrated.

**On August 13th, at the end of the evening candlelight procession, the fall of the Berlin Wall was remembered.** In 1994, on August 13th, the Berlin Wall Monument was inaugurated in the Shrine of Fatima at the southern entrance of the prayer area. It is made of a block of the notorious wall that began to be built in that German city on the night of August 12-13, 1961, and was demolished on November 9, 1989. The fragment weighs 2,600 kilos and measures 3.60 meters high and 1.20 meters wide. It was offered to the Shrine by a Portuguese resident in Germany.





As he was presiding over the Mass of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary held in the prayer area of the Shrine of Fatima on the last 15<sup>th</sup> of August, Cardinal António Marto presented Our Lady and the Mystery celebrated that day as “a source of solace and consolation in the struggle between good and evil”; “the beauty of our glorious destiny with God” and a path of hope towards the healing of a “world sick

of the social pandemics of individualism, indifference and corruption”.

“The *Magnificat* is the song of those who fight the struggle of life, carrying their hope in God in their hearts, a hope which allows us to imagine the beauty of a different world, where we would all care for one another, a hope of healing our sick world, not only from the health pandemic, but from the wider social ones: individualism,

indifference and corruption, which only generate poverty and exclusion. Mary sings with us the *Magnificat* of hope! Let us not be robbed of our hope”, he exhorted.

At the end of the celebration, Cardinal António Marto greeted the pilgrims who were present, in particular the international groups that had announced their visit to the Shrine Services: one German group, one Spanish group and five English groups.

## Our Lady of Fatima is hope for freedom in one of the countries where Christians are most persecuted

/ Fundação AIS

Every Tuesday at Myeong-dong Cathedral in Seoul, people pray for North Korea. For 25 years now, in the Archdiocese of Seoul, South Korea, and on the initiative of the “National Reconciliation Committee”, a Mass has been celebrated and the Rosary has been prayed for the reconciliation and unity of the Korean people.

And now, since 15 August, this moment of prayer has an even more special meaning. In a solemn ceremony held precisely in Seoul Cathedral, the Diocese of Pyongyang - capital of North Korea - was officially dedicated and consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima.

The date chosen for the consecration of Pyongyang and all of North Korea is significant. 15 August, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Virgin, also commemorates the day of the liberation of the Korean peninsula from Japanese colonial rule at the end of World War II. And this year, it also marks the 70th anniversary of the start of the fratricidal war at stake in the Korean peninsula.

The “National Reconciliation Committee” has stepped up its activities in recent years. According to Agenzia Fides, this translates into the “intensification” of the campaign

of prayer for the Christians of North Korea who “live their life of believers clandestinely and at great personal and family risk”.

It is recalled that North Korea is considered as “one of the worst places in the world for freedom of religion or belief”, as can be read in the most recent Report on Religious Freedom, published by the Fundação AIS. The report also states that North Korea “is one of the few countries where there is an almost total denial of this basic human right and a systematic violation of every freedom established by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”.

# Winter Programme at The Shrine of Fatima Guarantees Compliance with Rules Set by Health Authorities

/ Cátia Filipe



The winter schedule at the Shrine of Fatima came into force last November 1, with changes that will remain in vigour until Easter and will impact the celebrative programme.

During this period, the daily Masses of 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., and 3:00, 4:30, 6:30 p.m. take place in the Basilica of the Holy Trinity.

At 12:30 a.m., a daily Mass is celebrated in the Chapel of the Apparitions.

The Rosary is prayed daily at the Chapel of the Apparitions at 6:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. On Saturday and Sunday this moment of prayer takes place at 10:00 a.m.; and the Hour of Reparation is performed at 2:00 p.m. From Monday to Saturday there is a Rosary at 12:00 a.m., and the candlelight procession following the rosary is organized daily at 9:30 p.m. until Advent, then only on Saturday.

On Sunday the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima welcomes the Vespers prayer at 5.30 p.m.

An hour of reparation is organised between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. the First Saturdays. This is followed by a time of catechesis in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.

The 11:00 a.m. Mass and the 6:30 p.m. Rosary are broadcast daily on the official website [www.fatima.pt](http://www.fatima.pt).

To ensure the participation of the greatest number of people in safety, and in strict compliance with the rules defined by the health authorities, the Shrine concentrates in the Basilica of the Holy Trinity most of the Masses of the official programme.

The Shrine has adopted a set of safety rules that include: the mandatory use of masks in closed spaces and during celebrations in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity and in the Chapel of the Apparitions; the use of disinfectant solutions which are available at the entrance to the different spaces; the signposting of itineraries within the celebration spaces with distinct and duly marked entrance and exit zones; dedicated teams to welcome people and information signs on the procedures to be adopted. Audio instructions about the safety procedures will also be broadcast in the Prayer Area.

The complete agenda is available on the official website [www.fatima.pt](http://www.fatima.pt).

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