

180,000 pilgrims pleaded for peace in Fatima

On the last great pilgrimage of 2024 we also called for inclusion and care for our Common Home.

World peace, social justice, inclusion and care for the environment were the appeals that Cardinal Leonardo Steiner left in his homily at the International Anniversary Mass on October 13, attended by around 180,000 pilgrims who filled the Prayer Area of Cova da Iria.

The cry for peace was the one that echoed loudest in the words of Msgr. Leonardo Steiner, who asked the pilgrims gathered in Cova da Iria to repeat this prayer.

“Let us beg for peace! Before the statue of Our Lady of Fatima, let us ask for peace. Let us ask the Queen of Peace to convert, to transform the hearts of those who feed hatred, revenge, destruction, death, and to establish fraternity, brotherhood,” exhorted the Brazilian cardinal, in an appeal that was promptly accepted by the assembly, which repeated the call for peace three times with one voice.

On the evening of October 12, the archbishop of Manaus, which governs part of the Amazonian territory, had already focused on the harsh reality of indigenous communities and environmental degradation in the region. On October 13, he did so

again, calling for respect for indigenous peoples and care for the environment.

“Here, at the feet of the Virgin, I raise a prayer for the indigenous people: that they be respected in their way of life, in their culture. May the lands of the forefathers, the ancestors, be the home, the dwelling place of our indigenous brothers and sisters in Brazil. Let greed, destruction and death on ancestral lands disappear. Stop deforestation, stop predatory fishing, stop greedy, destructive and predatory mining,” asked the Brazilian cardinal, who also urged social justice, the inclusion of the poor and the welcoming of migrants and refugees.

Starting from the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus asks His disciples to tell him who He is, the president of the celebration urged the pilgrims to develop a personal relationship with Christ that is the fruit of a genuine search and encounter.

On this day, which marks the solemnity of the dedication of the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, consecrated on October 7, 1953, Msgr. Leonardo Steiner urged pilgrims to be “living stones” by building communities of faith.

In addition to this solemnity, which was pointed out throughout the celebration, the International Mass on October 13 also had other special features, namely the singing of a song, at the time of the presentation of the offerings, with lyrics by the poet Luís Vaz de Camões, whose birth 500 years ago is being celebrated this year.

Next, in one of the prayers of the Universal Prayer, we prayed for the National Republican Guard, on the day that this security force celebrates its 112th anniversary in the county of Santarém. “That each of your soldiers may permanently be an example of dignity, social conduct, human relations and solidarity with their fellow man,” the prayer asked.



Pope Francis recalled Fatima from Rome

In the customary word to the sick, during the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, nurse Ana Querido, who works in the field of palliative care and hope therapy, offered a thought on faith, hope and God's love, especially in times of illness and difficulty, presenting Our Lady as an intercessor and comforter who gives encouragement and hope.

The moment of adoration and the blessing of the sick person was fulfilled with a monstrance offered by the Irish people 75 years ago, following an initiative by the Conroy couple in 1948, in order to fulfil a promise to Our Lady of Fatima. Present at the celebration was the couple's daughter, Grainne Conroy.

The monstrance, which is part of the permanent exhibition of the Museum of the Shrine of Fatima, was offered on October 7, 1949, on the occasion of a pilgrimage to this Shrine, and has come to symbolize, in Fatima, the love that the Irish have for the Mother of God.

At the end of the celebration, the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima thanked Msgr. Leonardo Steiner for his presidency and asked the assembly gathered in Fatima to pray for their return to the work of the second session of the XVI General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which is taking place in Rome.

Also at the Vatican, Pope Francis recalled the anniversary of the last apparition in Fatima, in a reference that came up when he asked for Our Lady's intercession for the children who will unite in prayer for peace on October 18, in an initiative of the pontifical foundation Aid to the Church in Need.

“To the intercession of Our Lady we entrust the martyred Ukraine, Myanmar, Sudan, the other peoples who suffer from war and all forms of violence and misery,” said the Holy Father at the end of the Angelus prayer on the morning of October 13.

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