SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA

13 september, 2012

Bishop Pio Alves presides over September's Anniversary Pilgrimage

The Most Reverend Pio Alves, Auxiliary Bishop of Porto, presides, this year, over September's International Pilgrimage, which celebrates the anniversary of the fifth apparition of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima on September 13, 1917. The pilgrimage's motto is: "Builders of a solidarian society". Bishop Alves was ordained bishop on April 10, 2011, at the Shrine of Sameiro, Braga, Portugal. ---------- In declarations to the Shrine of Fatima, Bishop Pio Alves emphasizes the joy he felt upon receiving invitation to preside over pilgrimage. "It will be the first time I preside over a celebration in Fatima. This circumstance alone is one more reason to explain the ineffable emotion that always follows a passage through or a stay at Fatima. It was, therefore, with joy and gratitude that I received the friendly invitation of Bishop António Marto to preside over this pilgrimage", Bishop Alves says. Based on the yearly theme proposed by the Shrine of Fatima to its pilgrims and visitors, the subtheme of September's pilgrimage will be "Builders of a solidarian society". Bishop Alves reveals the message he will present to the pilgrims this way: "I'll try to help the pilgrims respond positively to the question posed by the Holy Virgin to the Little Shepherds – "Are you willing to offer yourselves to God?" – of which the Shrine reminds us constantly throughout this year". Specifically on the yearly theme of the Shrine of Fatima, the Auxiliary Bishop of Porto emphasizes that "the question posed by the Virgin Mary – "Are you willing to offer yourselves to God?" – reminds us that God counts on each one of us to be true and necessary actors in changing the "city of man" into the "city of God", which is to say actors of a true humanity. This question would be enough to prove the permanent timeliness of Fatima". In times of economic and social crisis, the Auxiliary Bishop of Porto is preparing to bring to Fatima a message of faith and hope and a call to charity. "The Shrine's program policy also invites us to have in mind the current situation, often very difficult, of our society. Our condition of disciples of Christ is realistic when it calls us to be sure to change what each one of us can change", he continued. A native of Viana do Castelo, Bishop Pio Gonçalo Alves de Sousa was ordained Bishop on April 10, 20111, at the Shrine of Sameiro, Braga. He is Auxiliary Bishop of Porto and President of the Bishops Commission for Culture, Cultural Patrimony and Social Media. The pilgrimage's program is the same as the one for the anniversary pilgrimages of May through October. September's pilgrimage is singular in that, as customary during the last few years, the prayer vigil from the 12th to the 13th is led by the employees and the volunteers of the Shrine of Fatima, under the watchful eye of the Shrine's Chaplains.

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