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Cardinal Manuel Clemente praises the “courage” of the pilgrims who hit the road

Today, in Fatima, the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon expressed his esteem for the “courage” of the pilgrims and emphasised the “certain truth of the apparitions of 1917 to the Little Shepherds at Cova da Iria.

“Let me tell you dear pilgrims, that I admire you and I deeply respect you, for your courage to leave home and hit the road, persisting, praying and longing to get here, as you finally are.” Said Manuel Clemente, during the Homily of the Vigil Mass of the international anniversary pilgrimage, celebrated this Thursday.

The Cardinal Patriarch supported that there are “many reasons” to give credit to Fatima, “like the ecclesiastical authorities have done in 1930 and the successive Popes.”

Manuel Clemente remembered the “statements and visits” of many Pontiffs to the

Shrine as well as the “visit of Pope Francis next year”.

“The certain truth of Fatima can be found in its correlation with the evangelic truth itself”, he added.

The Cardinal Patriarch reflected on the “advices” of conversion and prayer for peace given to the Little Shepherds by Virgin Mary in 1917.

“The short life of Francisco and Jacinta was filled with the willingness to save the others through self-giving and they achieved at a very early age a great maturity of faith and works” he remembered.

“For the Cardinal Patriarch, the advices of conversion, of themselves and for the others, made to the Little Shepherds; the call to pray for peace and the advert of war, the recommendation that they show the way everyone should be, as children and sons before God, humble and fraternal before men, are still up-to-date.”

For that reason, almost one hundred years ago Fatima was worthwhile, and for the same reason Fatima is worthwhile now. Underlined Manuel Clemente.

Before thousands of people, who participated in the candlelight procession, accompanied by the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, the president of the Portuguese Episcopal Conference presented a reflexion on the “visitation” of Mary to her cousin Elisabeth.

“Like Mary on her way to Elisabeth’s house, you were driven by feelings of solidarity and compassion. “ said to the pilgrims.

The speech remembered the intentions of the people present “for a relative or friend, who is looking forward to health, to a job or peace”, as well prayer intentions for world peace.

Manuel Clemente emphasized the importance of meeting the others, who need a visit, service and company”

“In the places where we come across signs of this redeeming Visitation, we have the assurance of its truth. That’s the wonderful and the miracle of all times. That was, mainly, the miracle of Fatima”, he explained.

The president of the Episcopal Conference mentioned that he hoped that all the pilgrims could leave Fatima “stronger and more committed” for every encounter with the other in the streets, at work, at home, wherever it’s needed and urgent”.

The international anniversary pilgrimage of May continues Friday with the ending celebration. At 9:00am the Rosary is recited in the Chapel of Apparitions followed by the procession to the altar, mass, welcoming of the Pilgrim Statue, blessing of the sick, consecration and farewell procession.

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