SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA

11 august, 2010

Dogs mistreated in Fatima - Shrine rejects accusations

Press Release by the Rectory of the Shrine of Fatima The Shrine of Fatima has been informed recently of a planned “Protest in Fatima – August 15, 2010 – against the manner animals are treated, namely dogs in the area of the Shrine”, organized by the “Associação Protectora dos Animais Abandonados de Fatima” (APAAF) (Fatima’s Association for the Protection of Abandoned Animals of Fatima), with the collaboration of “Núcleo de Ourém do Partido Pelos Animais (PPA) (Ourém’s Branch of the Party for Animals). After the Rectory’s press release of July 13, we have this to add: - The accusations widely disseminated through the Internet saying that, by order of the Rectory of the Shrine of Fatima, dogs found there are mistreated or killed are false and calumnious; - The shocking images, showing caged dogs, were not taken at the Shrine of Fatima, as suggested in the communications circulating in the Internet, but were taken from a Site for the fight against the mistreatment of animals, without mentioning the source; - As a consequence of this detracting campaign, two complaints were filed with the GNR (at the local police station), which resulted in investigations at the Shrine of Fatima, at Ourém County’s Dog Pound and at the Ourém’s Municipal Veterinary’s Office and the conclusion was that “no killed animals were found nor were found signs indicating mistreatment or other acts against the law”. We have concluded that the reasons behind this campaign are as follows: -An attempt to denigrate the image of the Shrine of Fatima and the Catholic Church, since the campaign was launched on the vigil of the arrival of Pope Benedict XVI to Fatima this past month of May: -We are seeing a case of manipulation of the people through the Internet’s social networks, where people receiving the defamatory texts are not able to verify the identity of the sender nor the veracity of the events mentioned; -We have here a case of abusive use of the name of the Shrine of Fatima, an institution very dear to many millions of Portuguese and foreign citizens, for the purpose of a campaign for the defense of animals, since their authors know that the name of the Shrine is of great importance for a lot of people; -The

defense of animals, a very noble cause, cannot be done at the expense of respected people and institutions, nor through calumny and defamation, and showing an ignoble disrespect for the truth of the facts, as the mentioned campaign has done. The Shrine of Fatima reserves the right to sue, at the opportune time, the organizations and people promoting this defamatory campaign against it. Fatima, August 11, 2010 *Fr. Virgílio Antunes,* Rector of the Shrine of Fatima

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www.fatima.pt/en/news/dogs-mistreated-in-fatima-shrine-rejects-accusations