

“Driving is an exercise in responsibility, respect and humanity”

Presiding over the 10th Pilgrimage of the Blessing of Helmets, Msgr. Rui Valério asked the thousands of motorcyclists present at the Shrine of Fatima to be “fierce protectors of all lives”.

Presiding over the 10th Pilgrimage of the Blessing of Helmets, the Patriarch of Lisbon could not have been clearer in his request this morning at the Prayer Area of the Shrine of Fatima to the approximately 180,000 pilgrims before him: “I ask you to be motorcyclists of God, bikers of Jesus Christ.”

Msgr. Rui Valério recalled that, by presenting their helmets to Our Lady, motorcyclists commit themselves to being, in life and on the road, “fierce protectors of all life and tireless defenders of the most sublime dignity of all human beings.” In this gesture they have undertaken today in Fatima, motorcyclists are also willing to uphold “the highest principles and values of the Gospel” and reveal themselves as “intrepid heralds of safe and responsible driving,” said the Patriarch of Lisbon.

Drawing an analogy between road trips and the pilgrimage that every human being is challenged to make, the president of the celebration argued that “no journey is merely geographical or spatial,” but also leads to “an inner movement, a spiritual journey that consists of a liberating path for the soul.”

In this sense, motorcycle trips “are much more than mere journeys or rides, they are liberating actions, freeing us from selfishness, arrogance, superficiality, hatred and loneliness,” Msgr. Rui Valério said.

Drawing a parallel between the journey and the “exodus that makes us leave ourselves to meet others,” the Patriarch of Lisbon pointed out that riding on the road puts motorcyclists in communion with God and the communities and people they encounter. “Driving is much more than technical skill; it is an exercise in responsibility, respect and humanity,” he said, warning that “the fascinating freedom we feel when accelerating must always be sustained by awareness and responsibility in the values of justice, truth, loyalty, fellowship and safety.”

At the end of his homily, Msgr. Rui Valério emphasized the importance of being pilgrims of justice, peace and hope, and invited motorcyclists to use the road not only as a means of transport, but as a path to holiness and service to others, always under the protection of the Virgin Mary.



The blessing of Pope Leo XIV

The pilgrimage also received the blessing of Pope Leo XIV. In a message read by Father Carlos Cabecinhas, rector of the Shrine of Fatima, the Holy Father said he joined his prayers to those of each motorcyclist present, “asking for everyone the renewed gift of faith, which guides our lives in the way of Jesus: it is He who guides our steps and, in all circumstances, commits us seriously to the protection of those He places on our path”.

The Holy Father also recalled that “personal effort in favor of road safety is an expression of divine charity”.

In this 10th edition of the pilgrimage, ABC - Associação Bênção dos Capacetes (Helmet Blessing Association) awarded the Shrine of Fatima with a medal of merit and recognition.

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