SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA

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Pilgrims followed the tradition by offering wheat in the pilgrimage of August

The president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization stated this morning, during the homily of the International Mass of the 13th of August in Fatima, that this place highlights the “essence” of the Christian life, made of conversion, silence, prayer and witness of charity”.

In the Homily, mainly on the life and example of the little shepherd, Rino Fisichella pointed out that, in the same way that they were victims of persecution and evil, and never gave up, also mankind needs to regain a new way of being free, through prayer and conversion.

The Prelate mentioned the probations that the little shepherds suffered on this date,

when they weren't allowed to go to Cova da Iria on the date that was fixed by Our Lady due to the “malice” and “lack of faith” of mankind, and how that affect them without never loosing their hope.

Rino Fisichella asked the pilgrims not to give up as well, even facing the uncertainties of life.

“Many of you amongst us know how it feels to be far away from home, away from the family, from the affection, know how it feels to live abroad. Today you came back here to the Chapel of Apparitions of Fatima, because this is your home”, he pointed out.

Rino Fisichella highlighted, on another hand, that even when facing moments of pain, “when it seems that nobody hears us” or when we “experience the sin” the good prevails in the end.

“Christ grabs us and, by holding us very close to Him, doesn't prevent us to be free, doesn't hurt us but gives us the opportunity to discover the real freedom and creates horizons of peace and joy, that we seek but never achieve because without Him we can't do anything.” He ended up by saying that today’s society creates the “dramatic illusion” of a certain freedom that doesn't let us create “friendships, relationships of honesty and love.”

The International Mass was concelebrated by 8 bishops and 261 priests. 158 groups were announced, with a total of 13.912 pilgrims from countries of the five continents with a strong predominance of European countries such as Italy, Spain and Poland.

Amongst the announced pilgrimages, we must highlight the National Pilgrimage of Refugees and Migrants, promoted in the scope of the 45th National Week of Migrations, organised by the Catholic Migration Service of Portugal, which this year’s motto was “Embrace the future” - the new generations of migrants are mankind’s tomorrow.”

“Holy Mary, Mother of God” was the subject of the Anniversary Pilgrimage of August that celebrates the fourth apparition of Our Lady to the little shepherds Francisco and Jacinta Marto and Lucia.

In this pilgrimage, during the offertory, the pilgrims brought, one more time, wheat and flour to give to Our Lady. It is an act that happens since 1940, year in which a group of young people from the Catholic Agriculture Youth of Leiria-Fatima diocese offered 30 bushels of wheat for the production of hosts to be consumed in the Shrine of Fatima. From that year, pilgrims from several dioceses kept doing this tradition which is reflected on the Eucharistic reference of the Message of Fatima. In 2016, 8530 kilograms of wheat and 437 kilograms of flour were offered.

The pilgrimage of August to the Shrine of Fatima comes to an end this Sunday with the concert “Queen of Heaven, Be Glad” interpreted by the Regina Coeli Choir, at 3:30 p.m in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.

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