



In Fátima, 170,000 motorcyclists were challenged to make Christ the direction of their lives



In Fátima, 170,000 motorcyclists were challenged to make Christ the direction of their lives

The 11th Helmet Blessing Pilgrimage was presided over by the Patriarch of Lisbon and included a greeting from Pope Leo XIV, sent through the apostolic nuncio in Portugal.

On September 20, about 170,000 motorcyclists made a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Fátima for the 11th Helmet Blessing Pilgrimage, presided over by the Patriarch of Lisbon, Rui Valério.

From early in the day, thousands of pilgrims parked their motorcycles along the streets and avenues of Fátima for what many participants consider the largest gathering of motorcyclists in the country.

The celebration began with the reading of a greeting from Pope Leo XIV to the pilgrimage participants, sent through the apostolic nuncio in Portugal, Archbishop Andrés Carrascosa.

“Pope Leo XIV encourages motorcyclists to bear witness, in their daily travels, to fraternity and prudence, promoting a culture of care and road safety,” the message

urges, closing with an apostolic blessing from His Holiness upon motorcyclists, “their families, the organizers, the volunteers, and all those who, with dedication, watch over safety and the protection of life on the roads.”

“On this occasion, the Holy Father joins, with particular affection, in prayer for those who lost their lives in road accidents, as well as the injured, their families, and all who bear the painful consequences of these events,” the Holy Father’s blessing adds.

“There is always a road that can change direction”

In his homily, Patriarch Valério challenged the motorcyclist pilgrims to make Christ the direction and the guiding standard of their lives, beyond a superficial or merely functional view of faith.

“Christ is not merely a protection we invoke before setting off, or a presence we turn to when danger arrives. Christ is the direction of life. He is the standard for our choices. He is the way we look at others. He is the way we use our freedom,” the presider of the celebration reminded them.

Framing the blessing of the helmets as more than “a magical gesture or a guarantee of immunity from risk,” the Patriarch of Lisbon also called for a faith that is reflected in the way we treat our neighbors.

“This blessing we receive today will truly be the greatest blessing if we not only arrive at our destination protected, but also learn to live in such a way that our own lives become a blessing for others,” Patriarch Valério explained.



Drawing on the readings proclaimed, the presider urged the pilgrims toward a more sustained faith, regardless of how long they have been away from the Church, the doubts they carry, or the reasons that brought them to Fátima.

“There is always a time to begin again. There is always a road that can change direction. There is always an opportunity to return. There is always a God who goes out searching for us,” the Patriarch of Lisbon reminded them.

The homily ended with prayer intentions to Our Lady for all who spend their lives on the road and for the professionals who work to keep roads safe, along with a word of consolation for the families of accident victims.

“In the end, every truly important road leads to this certainty of Saint Paul: ‘For me, to live is Christ.’ And when Christ is the way, we can move forward without fear,” Patriarch Valério concluded.

Prime Minister Luís Montenegro also sent a message to the participants in the Helmet Blessing Pilgrimage through the Helmet Blessing Association, in which he describes the pilgrimage as “a unique moment of encounter, faith, fraternity, and sharing,” and calls on the motorcycling community to play an active role in fostering a culture of prudence, respect, and protection of life on the road.

www.fatima.pt/en/news/in-fatima-170000-motorcyclists-were-challenged-to-make-christ-the-direction-of-their-lives