May 12/13, 2012



Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, has presided these days in Fatima over the Anniversary Pilgrimage of the first apparition of Our Lady. At the end of the celebrations, on the afternoon of the 13th, Cardinal Ravasi signed the Guest Book and wrote on it, in Italian, what we here translate into English: **“Greatly moved by the truly unique experience of spirituality, of human intensity, of festive reception, lived at Fatima, (please accept from me) a warm hug under the shadow of Mary’s presence!”** ---- On his arrival in Fatima, speaking to journalists, Cardinal Ravasi said that “Fatima ought to be considered a place not only of faith but also of culture. (…) Culture is not only the artistic experience, but also the experience of a people”. And he stressed that “our culture has as its polar star, on one hand, the Bible, on the other, Christian tradition”. Bishop António Marto, of Leiria-Fatima, was also present and spoke of Fatima as “a place for the encounter, communion, not only of people but also of cultures, all united by the beauty of the celebration of that same faith”. **ARCHIVE** The President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, Italian Gianfranco Cardinal Ravasi, is going to preside over the International Anniversary Pilgrimage of May 12/13, 2012, which this year has as theme: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord”. In an interview to the National Secretariat of the Pastoral Ministry of Culture, Bishop António Marto, of Leiria-Fatima, explained the reason for the invitation: “We have invited Cardinal Ravasi in order to show the importance of the cultural aspect of the announcement, expression of

faith and Christian spirituality of Fatima". The Pilgrimage – he added – intends to awaken the attention of all to the Christian faith as "promoter of culture". Bishop António also wishes that the presence of Cardinal Ravasi may contribute for the "discovery of the beauty of faith, to which this post-modern world is so sensitive and which shined and continues to shine in and radiate from Fatima". The International Pilgrimage will begin at 18h30 in the Little Chapel of Apparitions.

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