SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA

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Shrine of Fatima aligns next three years action with the preparation of the World Youth Day in Lisbon



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The new pastoral year will have as theme “Praise the Lord who lifts up the weak” and presents the message of Fatima as the expression of the solicitude of God for a suffering humankind.

The Shrine of Fatima will align the next three years of its pastoral action with the preparation of the World Youth Day (WYD) scheduled for 2023 in Lisbon, as an answer to the new pastoral challenges raised by the pandemics.

In the online presentation of the pastoral year and pastoral plan for the next three years, broadcast this Saturday, Father Carlos Cabecinhas explained that the new triennial now beginning has as horizon the holding of the WYD, whose theme is “Mary arose and went with haste”.

The new pastoral year now beginning will be themed “Praise the Lord who lifts up the weak” and takes place against a more generic background of three years, centered on Mary, thus following the call of Pope Francis to the young people all over the world, proposing them a preparatory path towards the World Youth Day in Lisbon, in 2023.

“Their common objective is, on the one hand, the attempt to recognize the new challenges of the interpretation and the proposal of the message of Fatima, emerging from the current cultural and economic-social situation generated by the pandemics, and on the other hand, the wish to bring the Shrine into line with the preparation

process of the World Youth Day", Father Carlos Cabecinhas explained.

The Rector of the Shrine of Fatima stated that the pandemic devastating the world "is a profound pastoral challenge asking to be wholly considered in the life and action of the Shrine".

"The emerging crisis of the pandemic provides an opportunity to welcome this call in a particularly significant way", Father Carlos Cabecinhas mentioned, underlining that within this context of difficulty the message of Fatima can be more and more "the expression of the solicitude of God for the suffering humankind".

"In as much as the message of Fatima invites us to intensify the experience of the encounter with God, it necessarily implies the Christian testimony and the availability to start the mission", the Rector of the Shrine noted.

Reinforcing the proposal of the message of Fatima "as an appeal to conversion" and perfecting the way to help pilgrims experience it; welcoming and presenting the message of Fatima as God's Good News and making the Shrine the place to welcome pilgrims in a fragile situation or in suffering are the main objectives of a triennial which in 2021 invites to announce and propose the meaning which the Christian faith, notably the message of Fatima, can offer to the experience of human frailty.

Therefore, Fatima offers itself "as message and place of hope by providing a meaning for the experience of human frailty and suffering" and the Holy Shepherds are shown "as exemplary images in the process of the meaning of suffering and in the solicitude for the other who is suffering."

The theme for the new pastoral year arises from the biblical quote in the Gospel of Luke "Young man, I say to you, get up!" (Luke 7:14), which takes us back to a horizon of hope, in spite of the troubled days, Father Carlos Cabecinhas also notes, underlining God's presence and commitment with the history of everyone and the entire humankind.

"This theme is an invitation to welcome and express this certainty, rekindled by that horizon of hope that the event of Fatima reaffirms", the priest says. On the other hand, he highlights Sister Lucia's Memoirs, when, in the June apparition at Cova da Iria, Our Lady promised her She would never abandon her: "Are you suffering a great deal? Don't lose heart. I will never forsake you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge" (Memoir IV).

This dialogue will "enlighten" the whole pastoral year showing us how we find in the message of Fatima "the first movement of empathy which lies in the will to know and incorporate the suffering of the other, trying to know him and giving him the possibility to express himself", but also the message "as a word which comforts and encourages, for it offers a possibility to find a meaning for overcoming the discouragement". The dialogue provided by Lucia also brings us to the need for the Shrine to find "pastoral processes" to make the pilgrims feel this place as the one which welcomes all those who "seek refuge" in the motherly lap of Our Lady.

For the experience of this new three year pastoral cycle, and for this pastoral year, the Shrine has prepared several elements of support such as the poster and other graphic work which throughout the year will remind of the theme guiding the life at the Shrine; a catechesis regarding this theme in the panels placed along the avenues of the Prayer Area, and a praying itinerary proposed to pilgrims, throughout the triennial.

As for training and meditation, we highlight the return of the Pastoral -Theological Symposium and the round of meetings at the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary.

On a cultural level, the great organ of the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary will be valued, with several musical moments throughout the year.

There will also be the temporary exhibition “The faces of Fatima: images of a spiritual setting”, which opened today and may be visited from December 2 and which has the particularity of exposing some of the most meaningful works of the Shrine’s permanent exhibition.

“This year, it is not possible for us to make the presentation day of the theme for the next pastoral year in the usual way, thanks to the limitations imposed on us by the pandemic situation that has struck us”, the Rector stated.

“We are all aware that next year will be deeply marked by the pandemic situation, and that we shall face many difficulties, on various levels. But we believe that the message of Fatima is a message of hope and uplift”, he said, at the end of his talk, in the hope that we can return to the Shrine “without limitations as soon as possible”.

The opening session for the new pastoral year, starting this Sunday, the first Sunday of Advent, was broadcast online, without the physical presence of guests, which is also a sign of the time that Fatima is living, as well as the whole country and the rest of the world, experiencing another weekend of curfew within the containment measures of the State of Emergency.

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www.fatima.pt/en/news/shrine-of-fatima-aligns-next-three-years-action-with-the-preparation-of-the-world-youth-day-in-lisbon