



Shrine presents the history of Fatima by the faces which brought it to life



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Temporary exhibition “The Faces of Fatima: Images of a Spiritual Setting” opened today and may be attended from December 2

This morning the Rector of the Shrine of Fatima inaugurated the new temporary exhibition of the Shrine: “The Faces of Fatima: images of a spiritual setting”, which may be attended from December 2, at the St. Augustine’s Social Hall, lower level of the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity.

At the event, in the presence of a reduced group of guests and staff members of the Shrine, Father Carlos Cabecinhas underlined the “growing importance” of these exhibits, evidenced by the number of visitors and by the “deepening of the meaning of Fatima’s message”, envisioning the language of art and the way of beauty as “fundamental pathways”.

After the opening there was a guided tour by the exhibit curator, Marco Daniel Duarte, who praised the wealth of information gathered over the course of a century by the archives of the Shrine of Fatima, which provided a significant number of the works exhibited.

Until October 15, 2022, visitors of the exhibition can follow the history of Fatima through

several faces which brought it to life, in a path calling all humankind, in a time of pandemic, to ponder over its own condition, presenting the theme of death and life as bright moments of man's pilgrimage in the world.

The exhibit is divided into two parts. In a first moment, that covers the first century of Fatima, the relevant faces of the history of Cova da Iria are made known, starting with the three Seers, going through the promoters, administrators, researchers and even the opponents of Fatima, who assumed doubts and militancy towards the event at Cova da Iria. The first part of the exhibition also has a section dedicated to artistic physiognomy, displaying works by those who looked at Fatima in the last century, and ends with a photo gallery of the protagonists of Fatima: the pilgrims themselves, displaying also the objects offered by the Popes to the Shrine, namely the gold roses and the ring of Saint John Paul II.

The second part proposes a praying and faith-centered journey through the "spiritual images", challenging the visitor to question himself about his human condition, in a kind of mirror game that confronts the specific reality we are living in with the desire of a connection with transcendence. At the present moment, less factual and more contemplative, the "faces that Fatima presents to the faces who visit her" are shown, starting with God himself, whom the exhibit tries to translate through the exposed artistic forms portraying Christ and the Trinity.

The exhibition culminates with a meditation on human condition from the perspective of faith, in a dialogue between ancient and contemporary art that raises several questions about human fragility. In the end, after presenting the faces of Mary in Fatima - namely by displaying the crown of the Image of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima -, a tapestry presents Christ as the owner of History, in an epiphany subtitled with an excerpt from the latest encyclical, "Fratelli tutti", where Pope Francis envisages the current time as redeemer for a more fraternal mankind.

The new temporary exhibition "Faces of Fatima: images of a spiritual setting" includes pieces from private and institutional collections, borrowed for the occasion, and displays pieces from the Museum of the Shrine of Fatima, namely from its permanent exhibition, which will be closed during this exhibit.

At the beginning of the opening, the Rector and the Curator thanked the several contributions that made the new exhibition possible, namely the people and institutions that provided some of the exhibits and all those who made the display possible, the director of the Museum of the Shrine of Fatima, the architect, the designer and the staff members of the Shrine.

The Rector also offered a word of gratitude to the volunteers of the Museum of the Shrine of Fatima, who collaborate daily in welcoming pilgrims who visit the exhibition.

The exhibition "Faces of Fatima" will obey all the health safety rules required in this time of pandemic and will fully comply with the contingency plan that the Shrine of Fatima has in place, which results from an articulation between the directives of the Directorate General of Health for museum spaces and the guidelines of the Portuguese

Episcopal Conference.

Most of the pieces that will be on display belong to the collection of the Shrine of Fatima, and there are also pieces from museums such as Museum of Azulejo, Museum of Aveiro and Museum of Póvoa do Varzim, in addition to private archives and libraries.

The exhibition will be open until October 15, 2022 and can be visited free of charge over the next two years.

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