SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA

19 may, 2009

Upon its return to Fatima, Statue of Our Lady welcomed by hundreds of people

On the evening of May 17, hundreds of people gathered at the Shrine of Fatima to welcome the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, after its trip to the Patriarchate of Lisbon and the Diocese of Setúbal, on the occasion of the celebrations of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Monument to Christ-King. At about 21h30, the Rector of the Shrine, Father Virgílio Antunes, invited all those present in the Little Chapel to move to the churchyard of Most Holy Trinity Church, in order to welcome the Statue, which, at the time, was already inside that church. As soon as the large main door of this new temple of prayer was opened, there was heard a warm applause and one could watch some gestures revealing much emotion. After brief moments, the candles in the hands of a large group of faithful, composed of pilgrims and residents of Cova da Iria as well as from towns neighboring the Shrine, were lit and then the procession to the Little Chapel got started. The Statue of Our Lady was placed in its pedestal, after the removal of the Statue of the Pilgrim Virgin which is permanently enthroned in the Basilica, but which, during these two days, was in the Little Chapel of Apapritions. As soon as the glass cover protecting the statue was lowered into place, the pilgrims once again manifested their joy by clapping their hands effusively. Then the Rosary was prayed. **ARCHIVE** The Statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima will leave the Little Chapel of Apparitions, at about 8h45, on the 16th, for its trip to Lisbon and Almada, which will last two days (May 16 & 17). There will be a short celebration of the farewell. The return to Fatima will take place on the 17th, after the conclusion of the celebrations at the Shrine of Christ-King. The Statue will be welcomed back to Fatima at 21h30. Those wishing to be present to greet Our Lady upon Her return must gather at the churchyard of Most Holy Trinity Church, next to the main door. From there the Statue will be taken, in a candlelight procession, to the Little Chapel of Apparitions, where it will be placed back on its pedestal. The recitation of the Rosary will follow. While this Statue is away, the First Pilgrim Statue of the Virgin of Fatima, enthroned in the Basilica, will take its place.

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