



Director: Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas * Proprietor: Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima (Portugal) * Quarterly publication * Year VIII * Nr. 30 * 2011/08/13

Tripoli's Apostolic Vicar prays to Our Lady of Fatima

On May 13, in Tripoli, Libya, Tripoli's Apostolic Vicar prayed to Our Lady of Fatima to help the country to free itself from the "pest" of bombs and from all kinds of violence".

In declarations to FIDES Agency, information organ of Pontifical Missionary Works, Bishop Giovanni Innocenzo Martinelli also stressed that "prayer to Our Lady of Fatima is important, because She is also well-known throughout the Muslim world".

And he went on: "Today (May 13) is the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima. May She help us be freed from the 'pest' of bombs and from all kinds of violence. Blessed John Paul II suffered violence and Our Lady saved him. As Pastor, I call for the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima and of St. Francis so that our leaders may be convinced to take the way to negotiation and peace".

Tripoli's Apostolic Vicar said he was worried about the situation in the country: "As far as I know, there isn't any attempt to dialogue. That worries me, because they want to resolve everything through violence. But violence never brings positive results".



Message of Fatima focus on essence of Christian faith

In his visit to the Shrine of Fatima, a little over a year ago, Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that the Message of Fatima is still valid for today: "Mistaken would be he who thought that the prophetic mission of Fatima has ended", he said.

The Message of Fatima focus on the

warmly greet all the readers of this publication, which is sent to the five continents and brings the devotion to Our Lady of Fatima to the entire world. I greet the devotees of Our Lady of Fatima, who, by means of this Newsletter, stay in touch with the Shrine and follow up its life with



essence of the Christian faith and there resides its prophetic mission: it challenges one to pray, leads to God, makes possible to really experience the presence of God in our lives through Our Lady. The fidelity to the Message of the Mother of God and Our Mother is the real pastoral priority of the Shrine. The seven-year itinerary of celebration of the Centennial, which we have already begun and will continue until 2017, intends to make us conscious of the great richness and timeliness of the Message.

In taking on the new mission the Church entrusts to me as Rector of this Shrine, I am aware of the great responsibility it entails, but I am also aware of the enormous privilege that it is to be at the service of Our Lady.

At a time when I first write as Rector of the Shrine and Editor of the Newsletter "Fatima, Light and Peace", I want to

interest and prayer. I greet also all the institutions, religious congregations, parishes and shrines dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima throughout the world.

The Shrine of Fatima continues to be visited by millions of pilgrims, who deeply experience here their faith and have an intimate encounter with God through Mary. But there are many other devotees that, although geographically far away from here, are nevertheless united to those who come here and who find, in the Message of Fatima, food for their spiritual life. It is for all these that we publish the Newsletter "Fatima, Light and Peace", with the wish that it may be, more and more, a link of union between the Shrine and all the devotees of Our Lady of Fatima spread out throughout the world.

*Father Carlos Cabecinhas,
Rector of the Shrine of Fatima*

Father Carlos Cabecinhas, Rector of the Shrine of Fatima

I implore for all pilgrims maternal aid and protection



In a celebration held on the morning of June 11, after the 11h00 Mass in Most Holy Trinity Church, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima/Portugal, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, priest of the Diocese of Leiria-Fátima, 40 years old, took possession as Rector of the Shrine of Fatima. Immediately afterwards it was the turn for Fr. Cristiano Saraiva to be reappointed to the job of administrator of the Shrine of Fatima.

After having taken possession as Rector, the new Rector of the Shrine of Fatima headed for the Little Chapel of Apparitions, where he renewed his personal consecration to Our Lady of Fatima.

At the same time he also consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary the chaplains, employees, volunteers and all collaborators and pilgrims of the Shrine: "This

Shrine is Yours (O Mary!) and, therefore, I entrust it to Your maternal protection. Please bless the activities and projects that, faithful to the mission of this Shrine, we will seek to execute and, in all we'll do, please help us to be instruments docile to the will of God, the way You Yourself were. I beg of You, for all pilgrims, Your maternal help and protection and, for all others, Heavenly graces. May all those who seek You here be able to particularly experience the presence of God in their lives".

In his first words after having taken possession, uttered in Most Holy Trinity Church, and after the initial greeting, the new Rector of the Shrine of Fatima stressed "all the timeliness and freshness" of the Message of Fatima: "Faithfulness to this message of the Mother of God and Our

Mother is the true pastoral priority of the Shrine. The itinerary of seven years of celebration of the Centennial, which is ongoing and will lead us to 2017, intends none other than to make us rediscover or be conscious of the great richness of the Message, of the urgency to live it and of the need to spread it".

In his greeting he also addressed some words to the pilgrims of Fatima, "The pilgrims are the reason of all the initiatives that animate the life of the Shrine. All of us who work here intend to be instruments at the service of the Message of Fatima, making it possible for this Shrine to continue being a place of strong experiences of an encounter with God through Mary".

In continuity with the project begun this pastoral year, the priest recalled the priority of the mission of the Shrine of Fatima: "*My Immaculate Heart shall be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.* These words of Our Lady were the inspiration for the entire thematic itinerary of celebration of the Centennial, which has as its general theme: *My Immaculate Heart shall lead you to God.* This seven-year itinerary constitutes the pastoral plan for the Shrine until 2017 and it is in its materialization and fulfillment that resides the current pastoral priority of the Shrine of Fatima, because it focuses on the essence of the Message".

The date when Fr. Cabecinhas took possession as new Rector coincided with the date of birth of Blessed Francisco Marto, June 11, 1908.

Leopoldina Simões

Blessed John Paul II recalled during May Pilgrimage

On May 1, the world lived a special moment with the beatification of John Paul II. However, in Portugal, the great manifestation of thanksgiving for such a grace took place on May 13, during the International Anniversary Pilgrimage presided over by Sean Cardinal O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston, USA.

Cardinal O'Malley pronounced these words during the homily of the Mass of May 13: "God doesn't improvise. Just like John Paul II, I too am convinced that Our Lady of Fatima intervened, on May 13, 1981, to save the life of our Pope, when he was shot in St. Peter's Square. His life was spared so that he could be God's instrument to bring about the downfall of the Iron Curtain and end the political oppression of Communism throughout the world".

The Portuguese were joined by thousands of foreign pilgrims from 29 different countries, amounting altogether to around 200,000 people.

When the film "All Yours, all ours – Blessed John Paul II, pilgrim and apostle of Fatima", made by the Shrine purposely to premiere on this day, was being shown on giant screens at the Prayer Area, a meteorological phenomenon took place catching everyone's attention. For a long time, pilgrims could watch a halo, or round rainbow, around the Sun. This added to make very special a pilgrimage that saw the hymn of the Centennial of the Apparitions, "Teacher of the Announcement, Prophecy of Love" being sung.

Wrote Cardinal O'Malley in the Shrine's Guest Book: "I leave part of my heart here at the feet of Our Mother: Totus Tuus".



Most Rev. Virgílio Antunes, Bishop of Coimbra

“We preach Christ Crucified, Wisdom of God”

The Portuguese Diocese of Coimbra received, on July 10, “with expectation, enthusiasm and hope”, its new Bishop, the Most Reverend Virgílio do Nascimento Antunes.

The solemn entry celebration, well attended, took place in the new Cathedral of Coimbra.

In the homily of the Mass, with which he solemnly celebrated his entry in the Diocese of Coimbra, Bishop Antunes stressed: “It is urgent to go look for those who no longer practice their faith; for those who lost the meaning of their lives, due to the dire circumstances they find themselves in; for the sick, the aged and those who quietly suffer for lack of hope; for the poor, the unemployed, those who have fallen into holes they themselves or society have dug out; in order to bring to them the comfort of trust in the future and the first aid for their material needs”.

During his exhortation, he also spoke of the youth: “We need to go look for the youths in whom the optimism proper of youth has died and who now look to the future with mistrust. In all those persons we find the marks of Christ Crucified and also in them, through the Church’s action, the true Wisdom of God may show”.

One week earlier, on July 3, Bishop-elect Virgílio Antunes, had been ordained Bishop in Most Holy Trinity Church, at the Shrine of Fatima. Around ten thousand people marked their presence on this momentous occasion for the Church in Portugal.

“We preach Christ Crucified, Wisdom of God” is the episcopal motto of the new Portuguese Bishop, who explains it this way: “At a time marked by the exaltation of all that is human and earthly and, at the same



time, of negation of the transcendent and divine, we need to raise Christ as Savior of mankind. Before an auto-sufficient mankind, apparently capable of dominating this ephemeral life, but incapable of finding the ways to its happy realization, we need to proclaim the humble and servant God, Who provides, through His Cross and Death, the key of eternal life”.

He goes on to conclude: “It means that the announcement of the Gospel needs to be made to the four corners of the Earth, with a new and accessible language, always centered, however, on the founding event of our faith, that is, the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. It means, finally, that I want to exercise my ministry in the Church with the joy sparked by the Glorious Resurrection of Christ and with the humility and commitment emanating from His (Sorrowful) Passion”.

About the years spent serving the Shrine of Fatima, first as chaplain, then, since September 2008, as Rector, Bishop Antunes said: “I must admit that the years spent here were very good and that your collaboration and help were generous and friendly”.

The new Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, Fr. Carlos Cebecinhas, on behalf of the institution, prays to God and Our Lady that They may continue to illuminate the pastoral work and life of Bishop Antunes and adds: “The dedication and commitment to service of Bishop Virgílio, during his years here at the Shrine of Fatima, constitute an important incentive for all of us. I wish him fruitful apostolic work in the task the Church has entrusted to him”.

Leopoldina Simões

There is another world of Fatima outside Portugal

On the occasion of his episcopal ordination, Bishop Virgílio Antunes, in an interview to Portuguese Catholic Radio Renascença, spoke about the wide spread of the Message of Fatima throughout the world, which he was able to notice personally, first as Chaplain and later as Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, where he worked for almost six years.

This is what he had to say: “I committed myself wholeheartedly to this mission. I loved working at the Shrine of Fatima, because the work varies a lot, starting with the work indoors: pastoral, administrative activities, relations with people, pilgrims, employees, volunteers; then there is also a wider world of work outdoors, beyond the limits of the Shrine and the borders of our country”.

And he added:” The relations with movements, groups, associations, shrines and places dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima, with all those who maintain a great affection (for Fatima) is that other world, very beautiful, even fascinating, because we find there enthusiasm, faith, devotion and commitment. I can say that I passionately lived that time of service to the Shrine of Fatima”.

Fatima welcomes 25th Pilgrimage of Spain's Nighttime Adoration

On May 14 thru 16, Fatima welcomed the 25th Pilgrimage of Spain's Nighttime Adoration (ANE). Since the first pilgrimage, the intentions of the prayer of this group are the same: "to pray for vocations to the priesthood and for priests".

In commemoration of its 25th Pilgrimage, ANE donated to the Shrine of Fatima a silver and gold monstrance and an altar cloth embroidered in gold for the altar of the Little Chapel of Apparitions. The Shrine, in turn, offered these pilgrims a choral concert by the group "Schola Cantorum Little Shepherds of Fatima".

The approximately five thousand pilgrims came to Fatima in the company of the Most Reverend Manuel Ureña Pastor, Archbishop of Saragossa and ANE's National Assistant, who gave an interview to "Fatima Light and Peace", in which he spoke about his own experience as pilgrim, about ANE and about the timeliness of the Message of Fatima.

What did you feel as you accompanied this group of pilgrims to Fatima?

Most Rev. Manuel Ureña Pastor – Already in May 1996, at the time of the 10th Pilgrimage, I, as Bishop of Alcalá de Henares (Madrid), felt a great interior joy for being in Fatima, which I often visit in the company of Spain's adorers. I felt then that it was a first class event and the Shrine's reception was outstanding. Wishing to relive that experience, at a time when we are celebrating the 25th Pilgrimage, I gladly accepted to leave Saragossa and come to this place, which (Blessed) John Paul II called the Altar of the World. But now it is evident that this year's adorers are three times more numerous than 15 years ago. This was a further incentive for me to make this long trip to be here in the company of this family of adorers, with which I often meet in Spain.

What was your message to them?

Most Rev. Manuel Ureña Pastor – It couldn't be other than the Message of Fatima itself, but I also appropriated what the Holy Father recalled a few months ago when he visited this holy Marian place. Allow me to say that I shouted a lot, insisted a lot on the need to pray, to adore, to love and to work for the Kingdom of God. I stressed that today's world can't stay away from God. When we separate from God, we find nothing! I urged that we don't let ourselves to be misled, that we seek God in all occasions and then everything will improve. ANE – I believe - obviously follows this way of thinking. But we have to be apostles. Of course, this Message –I stressed – is rekindled, is found, is better understood, if we do it, like the last Popes, next to the Mother of Fatima. I asked for maximum trust in Most Holy Trinity, through the Virgin, through the Mother of all and of everything. She reminds us insistently to do what He says at every moment. In Fatima I asked that we be conscious that



only in God the world will have solutions for what we call the social, labor and political problems. Away from God, we face emptiness everywhere. In Fatima, thousands and thousands of pilgrims have found, throughout the years, their source of solutions. Adorers, by their Eucharistic vocation – the focus is on the tabernacles – find anew, in Fatima, the way to provide for what the world needs.

Nighttime Adoration is, every year, the largest foreign pilgrimage to Fatima, but there are many other groups of Spanish pilgrims coming to Fatima. How do you view the devotion of the Spanish people to Our Lady of Fatima?

Most Rev. Manuel Ureña Pastor – In Spain – better, throughout the entire world – the devotion to this Marian place par excellence is felt in an extraordinary way. People are attracted to Fatima for the singular reason that possibly –no, cer-

tainly – its Message is the essence of the Gospel. Besides, the presence of the last Popes – Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI – is the confirmation of that. There is the frequent visit to Fatima of Popes, their speeches and homilies – which help us a lot to support the new evangelization – that preaching I mentioned earlier – to seek God to approach God, to find God... We should always imitate the simplicity of the Seers of Fatima, with which they communicate to us the Message of Fatima.

I, who was in several dioceses as Bishop and now am the Archbishop of a shrine – the Shrine of Our Lady of Pilar, of Saragossa, of much historic reach – often notice the strong attraction of Fatima, whose pastoral ministry I here expressly applaud. I rejoice with the organizers of this great pilgrimage and wish that Fatima be a goal in their lives. I, like them, in imitation of what Blessed John Paul II once said, "go to Fatima every day".

Chapel of Blessed of Fatima received sculptures of seers

The blessing of the statues of Blessed Francisco and Jacinta Marto took place on July 8, in the Chapel of St. Joseph's Convent, of the Discalced Carmelite Sisters of Fatima, Portugal, followed by the celebration of Holy Mass, presided over by Bishop António Marto, of Leiria-Fatima, accompanied by Bishop Augusto César and Bishop Virgílio Antunes and concelebrated by several priests, amongst which there were the current Rector of the Shrine of Fatima and the Provincial of the Discalced Carmelites.

This chapel was dedicated on February 20, 2008, Liturgical Feast of Blessed Francisco and Jacinta, by Bishop Marto, making it the first chapel in the Diocese of Leiria-Fatima dedicated to the Little Shepherds and the second temple in Portugal under this invocation.

It is a chapel very dear to former Pope John Paul II. The First Stone came from the Wall of Holy Year 1975 at the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, in Rome; the Blessing Parchment is signed by the Holy Father himself, on October 16, 2003, a little over a year before his death.

However, since the date of its inauguration till recently, there was no conception of how the statues to be placed in the sanctuary should look like. Then the idea – a little original, we must admit – came up to place the stone statues not somewhere up high on the wall, but on the

floor, at the level of the faithful, in a praying attitude next to the tabernacle, where both Francisco and Jacinta spent long hours in adoration to the “Hidden Jesus”.

Our thoughts went immediately to the statues in *Loca do Cabeço* (hilltop grotto), a work by Sculptress Maria Amélia Carvalheira, which represents the Little Shepherds in a beautiful posture of adoration and recollection. The chosen stone was the “Fatima Cream”, a local limestone, which lends authenticity and a beautiful dull tone to the sculptures.

When Sister Ângela de Fátima Coelho, Vice-Postulator for the Cause of Canonization of the Little Shepherds knew of the initiative, she immediately wanted to finance the entire project, since it is very great the love and devotion she has for the Little Shepherds, not unlike her predecessor, Fr. Luís Kondor, whom you can't fail to mention here, because of the great help he was to us and the great joy the erection of this chapel brought him. Our heartfelt gratitude, thus, goes to Sister Ângela and to the Postulator's Office for this friendly gesture.



Now it is our responsibility to “keep these two candles lighted up” – in the words of Sister Ângela – with our prayer and sacrifice, so that the light of the Little Shepherds may go on shining throughout the world and attracting mankind to God.

Discalced Carmelite Sisters of Fatima, Portugal

Timeliness of Message of Fatima debated in Congress

Already looking forward to the celebrations of the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady, the World Apostolate of Fatima gathered, at its international headquarters in Fatima, “Domus Pacis”, from March 24 to March 30, about one hundred-fifty people, amongst which twelve priests, from the USA, Brazil, Ghana, Nigeria, Philippines and Ireland, in order to study the Marian message.

The meeting, titled “Fatima, today more timely than ever”, counted on the presence of several personalities, amongst which Bishop António Marto, of Leiria-Fatima; Fr. Virgílio Antunes, Rector of the Shrine, later on named Bishop of Coimbra; Msgr. Luciano Guerra,

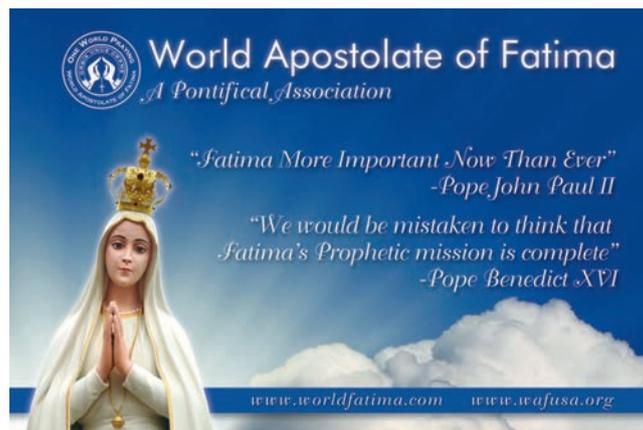
former Rector, Sister Ângela Coelho, Vice-Postulator for the canonization of Blessed Francisco and Jacinta Marto; Fr. Andrew Apostoli, author of the recent book “Fatima for Today”; and

also family members of the three Little Shepherds.

Each one of them, through talks and testimonies, provided the meeting with rich content and timeliness in its practical application.

The program included also the visit to the sites of the apparitions, scheduled times for prayer at the Shrine of Fatima, viewing of films and documentaries, followed by discussion, as well as special sessions of formation on the spread of the message of peace and hope which echoes from Fatima to the world.

The participants left this meeting more informed and greatly motivated to generously answer the calls of the Blessed Virgin to prayer, conversion and reparation.



Democratic Republic of Congo

Celebration of May 13 in Kolwezi



The popular devotion to Our Lady of Fatima was introduced, already some time ago, in the Diocese of Kolwezi, Democratic Republic of Congo. Every 13th of the month, Christians head for a place called "Domaine Marial" (Marian Domain), located on a hill overlooking the south side of the city. There, between 16h00 and 18h00, they pray the Rosary and take part in Holy Mass celebrated in honor of the Virgin of Fatima. Also three times a year - on May 13, August 15 and October 13 - a large pilgrimage is organized by the faithful, who walk in procession from the Cathedral to "Domaine Marial", with the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima surrounded by flowers at the front of the procession.

Since this year the 13th fell on a week

day, the Commemoration of the first Apparition of Fatima was celebrated on Sunday May 15. More than 5,000 people took part in the large procession and in the solemn Mass presided over by the Most Rev. Nestor Ngoy Katahwa, Bishop of Kolwezi. The day's theme was the Message of conversion and prayer for peace, as requested by Our Lady on May 13, 1917, from the three Little Shepherds of Fatima. This Message was commented in connection

with the present situation of the country, at a time when the inhabitants are preparing to vote in presidential and legislative elections. The Ordinary of the place reminded everyone that the 13th of May also means a lot to the City of Kolwezi, which, on that day, in 1978, saw the start of a cruel war, in which the French Foreign Legion intervened.

The Bishop of Kolwezi is also the Spiritual Director of the World Apostolate of Fatima and National Director of the Marian Movement of Priests in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Episcopal House of Kolwezi



South Africa

Cape Town venerates Our Lady of Fatima



The Cathedral of Our Lady of Flight to Egypt in Cape Town, South Africa, has a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima.

The statue venerated there, representing the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima, was donated to the Cathedral in 1980, at the time of a visit of the Pilgrim Statue of Fatima to that country.

In this Cathedral, located in the second largest city of South Africa, Our Lady is on an altar, always very cared for by Her devotees, where various symbols of devotion, such as candles and flowers, are deposited.

It is also a place where are often placed at the feet of Our Lady, although for only a few moments, passports and other ID cards of Portuguese and other people who have emigrated there, also of natives and of refugees from several regions of Africa. These are devotional gestures, which symbolize the confidence in Our Lady, to Whom are offered thanksgivings for graces received and petitions for protection and help.

Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portogruaro



The Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portogruaro (Venice), Italy, is administrated by the Capuchins of Venice and was solemnly consecrated on May 13, 1954, by the Bishop of the Diocese of Concordia-Pordenone, Most Rev. Vittorio De Zanche.

The merit of this work goes out, first of all, to his predecessor, Bishop Vittorio Alessi, who often times had asked the Superiors of the Capuchins to open a convent in his diocese, precisely at Portogruaro.

In 1945, a Capuchin friar, Fr. Davide da Portogruaro (a native of the city), arrived, sent by the Provincial of the Capuchins of Venice with the mission of choosing a site for building there a small convent. The choice fell on a plot of land in the suburbs of the city. Count Gaetano Marzotto, a great benefactor of the Capuchins, was the donor. In 1947, Capuchin Fr. Gaetano Grotto, of Thiene (VI), first built a modest residence with the help of many volunteer workers from amongst the inhabitants of the area. It was, altogether, a chapel and a temporary residence.

The end of 1949 saw the beginning of the stone construction of a modest convent for the friars, which Bishop Alessi visited and blessed at the end of 1950.

The foundations of the church, which would be dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima, were started on September 12, 1951, Feast of the Name of Mary, according to a project by Architect Giuseppe Scarpa. The Shrine was finished at the end of the following year and was inaugurated on December 25, Solemnity

of the Nativity of Our Lord. Finally, the solemn consecration took place on May 13, 1954, during which Bishop Di Zanche expressed a wish: "May this Shrine become a place, for many souls, of light and comfort and may this Church irradiate a great light to Portogruaro".

For many years, the main feast was celebrated solemnly, with a lot of faithful in attendance, on September 18, and it was considered a city feast. But, for years now, has been moved to May 13, Feast of Our Lady of Fatima.

In 1999, the convent attached to the Shrine was chosen as headquarters of the "Center of Evangelization" of the Capuchin Friars of Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. In 2002, with the restoration, amongst other things, of the old part of the convent, the "Franciscan Center for Spirituality San Damiano" was created.

In 2007, on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Apparitions of the Holy Virgin to the three Little Shepherds of Fatima, the interior of the Shrine was restored and enriched with splendid frescoes inspired in the Apparitions of Fatima, the work of Maltese painter Fr. Nathanael Theuma.

*Fr. Gianantonio Campagnolo,
Rector of the Shrine of Portogruaro*



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Replica of Little Chapel of Apparitions in Rio de Janeiro

A replica of the Little Chapel of Apparitions of the Shrine of Fatima, with exactly the same dimensions as the original, was inaugurated on May 28, in Rio de Janeiro, at *Recreio dos Bandeirantes*.

The celebration was presided over by the Most Rev. Orani João Tempesta, Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro. Amongst the people present were: Bishop António Marto, of Leiria-Fátima; Most Rev. Virgílio Antunes, Bishop-elect of Coimbra and then still Rector of the Shrine of Fatima; and more than a dozen priests, as well as deacons, religious, seminarians, authorities and a lot of people, totaling about 3,000 faithful. The celebration was also followed up by many thousands of people through the Brazilian media.

In his homily, Archbishop Orani traced the mission of this new shrine: "This place, which we are now inaugurating, ought to become for our entire Church, in



The Statue of Our Lady of Fatima venerated there was blessed in the Shrine of Fatima, Portugal, on May 13, 2011.

our entire city and region, a site showing exactly what is going on at Fatima, Portugal. May this place that now emerges in our city be, for our country and for the whole world, specially for Latina America, a beacon illuminating and bringing people to the Lord so that they may take

back their Christian lives, as people of God that they are.

The enthronement of the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima by Bishop Marto was the highlight of the celebration and provoked much applause and some tears.

The Bishop of Leiria-Fátima prayed that this work may grow, flourish and become a great center of pilgrimage, "like a spiritual oasis where people may come and refresh their faith, rekindle their spiritual life and regenerate also their social life, by listening and letting themselves be attracted to the maternal love of Mary".

This project was the initiative of the Archdiocesan Association "Evening with Mary", presided over by Mr. Berthaldo Soares. The first Rector of the new Shrine of Fatima is Canon José Gomes. Both these men have promised total fidelity to the Message of Fatima and to the Church's Hierarchy.

António Valinho

Pilgrim Statue visits Hospital of Ragusa, Italy

"Ragusa – The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady from the Shrine of Fatima will arrive on Sunday May 29, at 17h00, at the Square of the Civil Hospital of Ragusa, where it shall stay in the chapel of this hospital, at the service of the pastoral ministry of health, until June 5".

That is how it was announced, in a local newspaper, the arrival of the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which has visited, for the third time during the last years, the Hospital of Ragusa, Sicily, Italy, visit which was requested and organized by the Hospital's Chaplain, Fr. Giorgio Occhipinti. The patients of the hospital lived, during this visit, heavenly days. They forgot their pains, or, better said, by their faith they felt closer to Our Lady, Who visited them, and they received from Her the fortitude to offer up, as She Herself asked the Little Shepherds of Fatima, their sacrifices for the conversion of all of us sinners.

After a week through the towns of Ragusa, with moments of intense devotion, the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady departed from Ragusa and went to Palermo, then to Calabria and then back to the Marian Shrine of Fatima.

At the farewell of the Statue in Ragusa, there were present several civil authorities, such as Mayor Nello Dipasquale and Adviser Michele Tasca. Before the final greeting, Fr. Giorgio Occhipinti spoke about the deep

meaning of this religious event and what Fatima represents for each pilgrim: "To visit Fatima is a unique emotional experience which every Christian should feel at least once in one's lifetime. It is a place where the spirituality is tangible, where pilgrims crawl, on their knees, with great devotion, the 150 meters of the square before arriving at the feet of Our Lady".

For an entire week, there took place successive celebrations and meetings in the countryside and in the city, all according to the program set by Fr. Giorgio, who said: "I am happy for having, again this year, received the Pilgrim Statue of Fatima. We made ours the theme proposed this year by the Shrine of Fatima: *Most Holy Trinity, I adore You profoundly*. For the believer, this attitude is the recognition of the transcendence of God, it is the acceptance of His mystery, it is the desire to honor and glorify Him profoundly".

The program was, as always, very diversified and foresaw several other encounters, besides the ones with the sick: encounters with volunteer associations, with doctors and other health professionals; encounters in chapels, squares, in the Cathedral; always with large attendance of people, besides those personally invited by the institutions involved.



Encounters with children were also organized. The encounter with the Community of *Santa Croce Camerina* was well attended and welcomed by a music band.

Holy Mass was celebrated, as usual, in the presence of the Statue, at the Department of Oncology Maria Paternò Arezzo. Later, it visited Chiaramonte Gulfi, more precisely the Shrine of *Maria Santissima de Gulfi*, where took place a spiritual retreat for professional health doctors and volunteers.

On Sunday June 5, in the morning, the concluding Mass of the pilgrimage was celebrated. In the afternoon it was the turn of the blessing of the sick, followed by the Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Farewell to Our Lady.